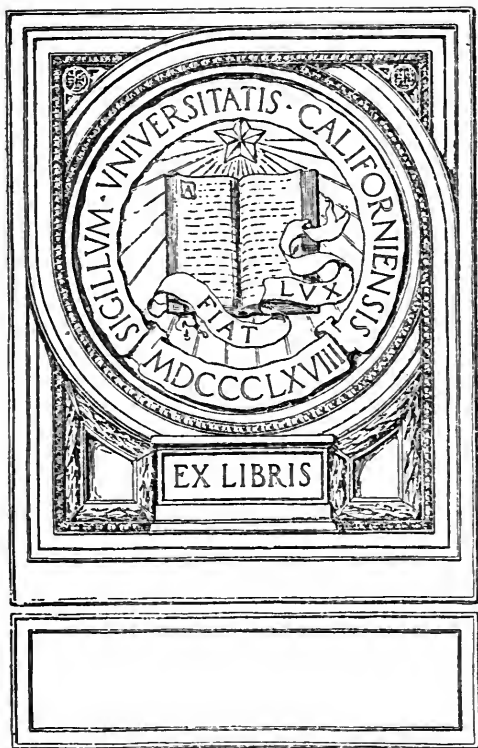
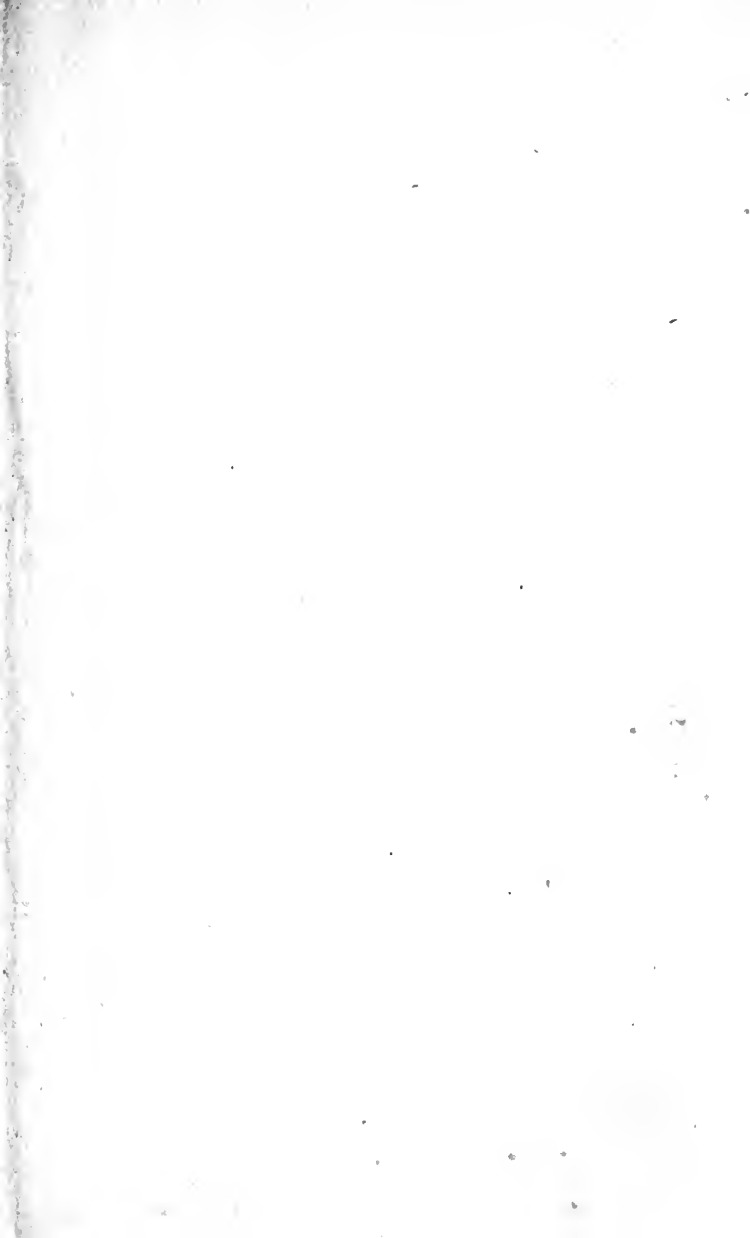


A SKETCH OF
THE
NEW ZEALAND WAR
BY
MORGAN S. GRACE
C.M.G.

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A SKETCH OF THE .
NEW ZEALAND WAR

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Murray & Grace

SKETCH OF THE NEW ZEALAND WAR



By MORGAN S. GRACE C.M.G

COUNT OF THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE
MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUN-
CIL OF NEW ZEALAND



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HORACE MARSHALL AND SON

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TO
V.C. SIR ANTHONY HOME K.C.B

an eminently distinguished man, whose Literary Taste is only
surpassed by his Personal Courage, this brief sketch is
dedicated. My admiration for his pure Love of
Justice and Truth suggested this Narrative,
and the pleasure I take in contemplating his surprise at its details
gives zest to this effort to
renew my Youth.

4529.10

Preface

THIS sketch of the Maori War is not intended to have any merit except spontaneity. I have consulted no authorities, read no despatches.

I hold that no one who was a participator in the events of this war could realize its true character by reading the published accounts of it.

I have a photographic plate in my brain of everything that I saw, from which I can strike off pictures at will. And I can act as a phonograph of everything I heard. I can describe and narrate by word of mouth without difficulty, but I am a cramped writer, and mere penmanship makes my progress like that of a horse

PREFACE

galloping with his legs tied. All the same, as I shall soon be dead and gone, I now give effect to the wish I have had in my mind for more than thirty years.

I scorn a lie in any form, not merely on account of its intrinsic faultiness (for I have known dozens of fine fellows in all walks of life lie on occasion without circumstance), but because, if I told a lie, I would have to own up at once and take the consequences, lest my adversary should think I was afraid of him. What I have written I have seen or heard from true and worthy witnesses, and if you will look through my eyes, you will see it also. The knowledge cannot fail of a humanizing effect. You will thus learn what blundering asses we were, and what fine fellows the Maori.

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Introduction

THE experiences of the Anglo-Saxon race in its relations with the Maori have always been uncommon. The Maori from the commencement practically asserted his superiority, and in many essentials has justified the assertion.

It will be remembered that in the early trading days a Maori chief always spoke of a White Man as his *Pakeha* (White Man). The trader's privileges were based on the Maori chief's proprietary claims. The White Man had no inherent rights. His life and property were really at the mercy of the chief. The Maori, being essentially a gentleman, wrapped this thorn deftly in rose leaves. Its existence, however, was real.

It is a fact, that Bishop Pompalier, on first landing north of Auckland, presented himself in full canonicals, mitre on head and pastoral

staff in hand. The Maori surrounded him, flourishing their tomahawks, and deliberately undressed him to examine into the character of his pretensions. When they came to his undershirt and drawers, His Grace the Archbishop made signs to them that good manners dictated restraint of their curiosity. They respected his wishes, but tried on all his garments. As he had exhibited much amiability and dignified sweetness, they assisted him to re-robe, and led him to their runanga-house, treating him with every consideration. The attitude of the chiefs to the Church of England missionaries was characterized by the dignified respect due from great functionaries to each other. The Maori showed themselves above prejudice. This was clearly displayed in a theological discussion conducted in the Auckland district by the Maori adherents of the Catholic and Anglican Churches as to the Church of England claim of Apostolical succession and consequent authority. A great meeting was assembled in Waikato. The Maori devoted ten days to the public discussion, which was held in the open air. The astute Catholic advocate yielded the honour of opening the debate to the Anglican, as New Zealand was a British colony. He then took

two and a half summer days to reply. He had by him a bundle of sticks. He planted the first in the ground, christening it St. Peter, and gave a sketch of St. Peter's life and works. He followed this up by placing a labelled stick for each of the Popes in historical succession, sketching each worthy's story, and, when he came to the period of the Reformation, pointed with emphasis to the break in the Anglican line. The Maori, who cared only for the argument, gave the decision by acclamation in favour of the Catholic Church. The debate was an admirable instance of the faculty of sustained attention to discussion shown by the Maori in listening; of the power of order and concentration shown by their orators, with the force of conviction at the root of the effort; and of the acuteness of the Maori, already as great in theology as his teacher. The same capacity to excel is seen to-day in the Maori within the walls of Parliament. He is unsurpassed either as a political strategist in party warfare, in eloquence if words avail, or in reticence if mystery is likely to forward his objects. The result is, he often holds the balance of power between political parties, and whilst loudly declaiming that the rights of his race are always made subservient to the inter-

ests of the white people, has really for a quarter of a century escaped the payment of his legitimate portion of the land-tax, whilst benefiting enormously by the construction of railways, macadamised roads, and expensive bridges leading to his landed property at the cost of the Colony.

So well has the Maori managed editors and public opinion generally that it has been customary to say the Maori has been robbed of his land by the European. I have no hesitation whatever in affirming that the European has been robbed of his money by the Maori, under the sanction of the most approved, gentlemanly, courteous methods.

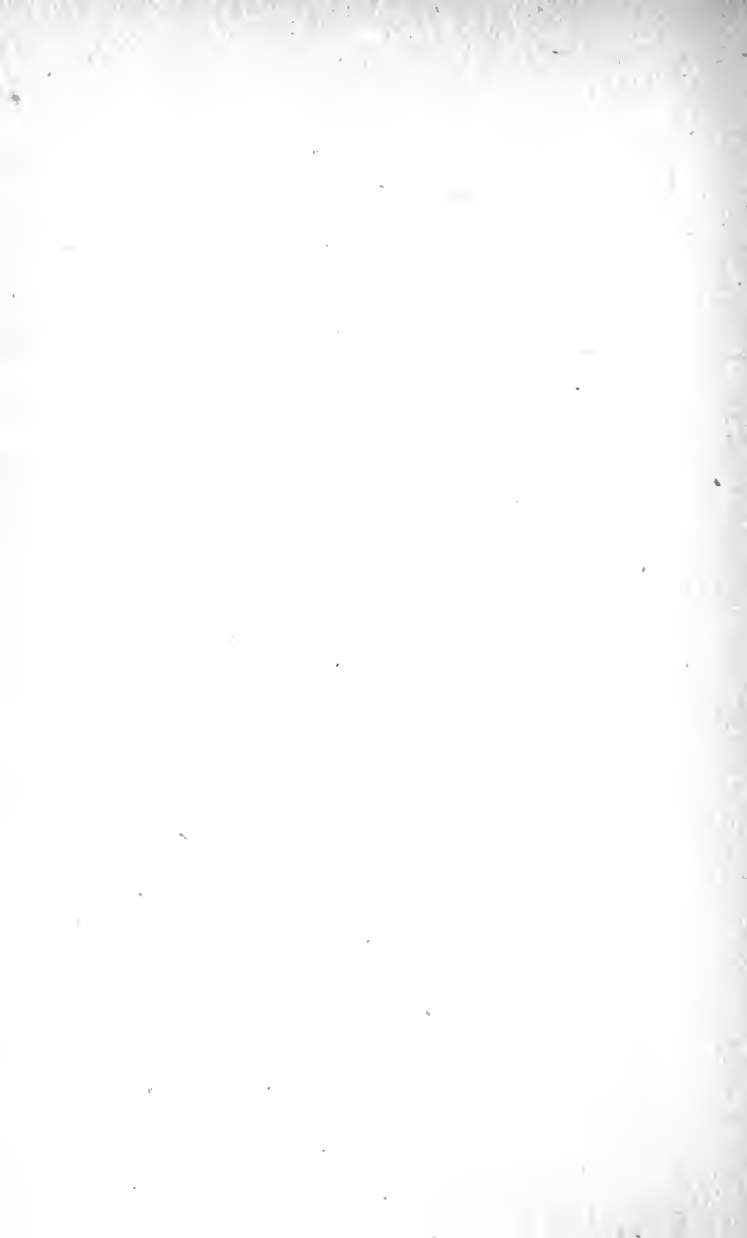
It must not be forgotten that the Maori's title to his lands was attained by conquest and occupation. There was no constitutional law to guide the Maori. He occupied by force, and defended his occupation by war. Whatever the aggressions of the Anglo-Saxons, their power to make treaties was always regulated by the constitutional law obtaining in the British Isles. A reference to *The Law of Nations* (Ed. 1834), by Chitty; to the Charter of Lord Carlisle; to Sir Humphrey Gilbert's Charter for Virginia; and to the Letters Patent to John Cabot, proves that England

had no legal sanction to make a treaty bearing the interpretation which the pressure of the Church Missionary Society and Exeter Hall subsequently gave to the Treaty of Waitangi. The true meaning of the Treaty of Waitangi as understood by the Maori and interpreted by Anglo-Saxon law and usage was that the Maori were protected in possession of all the lands they had hunted over or cultivated. In the end the Europeans were cheated into buying from the Maori millions of acres of land which the native New Zealander had never seen.

So much for the statecraft of the Maori. The missionary interpreted the Treaty of Waitangi for him: the Maori took the profit and repudiated his benefactor. In dealings for land with private individuals it is true that the Maori sometimes had the worst of the bargain, but quite as frequently the European found that when he had paid for the land the Maori seller subsidized other claimants to upset the title, and remained in the enjoyment of his tribal claim to the property after he had spent the price obtained for it in feasting his relations. It was from the beginning a case of diamond cut diamond, and as nothing could really impoverish the Maori as long as there

remained to him the tribal right to live on and with his own people, the chocolate-brown diamond cut the deepest. So much for the Maori in peace. I hope presently to delineate some of his warlike characteristics.

MY EARLY DAYS





I

I WAS the delicate son of a highly intellectual mother: physically the poorest specimen of a large family. I adored my mother with the reverence which a feeble child feels for a protector. She never showed a particle of partiality for me. Indeed, mothers rarely set their hearts on any but their eldest or youngest children, and her eldest son was stormily successful from the cradle up. He conquered all difficulties with the air of an emperor, and kicked or cuffed or bluffed his way up to the top of any circle in which he moved. He was a fine fellow: I was not.

I had, however, enough of a child's subtlety to enable me on most occasions to find ingenious excuses for the difficult positions into which I drifted.

In course of time my health became so weak it was thought desirable to send me to a farm in the country, called Sheadogue, which was

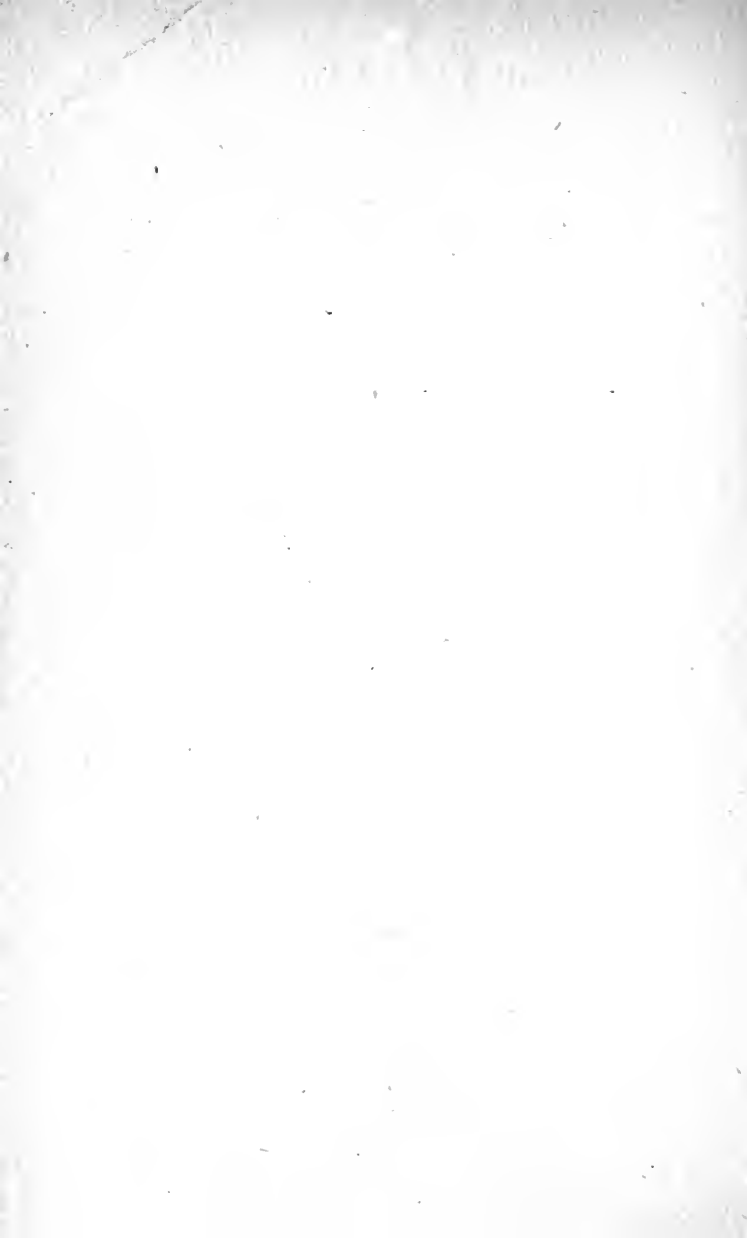
owned by my father, and managed by what in Scotland is called a bailiff. Here I acquired that attachment to the people which has since given me the freedom of their hearts. I went to school with a lot of bare-footed, ragged-breeched urchins, who first instilled heroism into my soul. Their theory was "blood is blood." They showed me ruined abbeys, broken-down bridges, tumbling walls, Gothic tombs and chapels; all of which, I was assured, belonged to my ancestors. This was a revelation. My mother's mind was ascetic: my maternal grandmother was a Scotch Calvinist. All this field had been hidden from me, and now, with the acute perception of a child's mind, I saw trouble in store.

I could not feel that I had "any blood" in me, and yet I knew that argument was out of the question. As I foresaw, when any difficulty arose to bar our boyish objects, every one exclaimed, "Blood is blood," and I was called to the front.

Nobody could have been more unfit for the position. It was useless to reason, so I did my best. Sometimes I had to engage in personal conflict a champion from some other barony. The result was invariably disastrous. On these occasions my backers used to lift me

off the ground, and wipe the blood off my face with my cap, saying, "You are powerful weak entirely. Never mind, 'blood is blood.' Go in again." And I did, with the same result, until a general scrimmage resulted, at which I was better, as, though very slight and small, I was as active as a squirrel, and knew how to hearten others.

These experiences accustomed my mind to tribal disputes and irregular warfare, and I make these disclosures to warn the reader that my sympathies are with the Maori, though my affections are all with the British soldier, who in adversity or success is a child of nature.



ARRIVAL IN AUCKLAND

II

I ARRIVED in Auckland in June, 1860, in medical charge of troops. We had touched at Sydney and heard of the Maori War. Communication was scant at that time, and but little was known. Enough, however, to make me feel the Maori tomahawk crunch through my skull into the brain.

Nothing can be more charming than the first view of Auckland. I have seen many beautiful cities in Europe, Asia, America, and Australia. I doubt whether any compare favourably with Auckland in situation and surroundings. It looked to us weary voyagers a haven of rest. No one could believe that in such a lovely country, so peaceful, so attractive, war could be possible.

The troops on landing were met by a military band, and marched up Queen Street, surrounded by a rejoicing people. We brought fresh hope and joy to anxious colonists. The affair at Waireka had left a poor impression as

to the efficacy of British troops in Maori warfare, and anxiety and alarm pervaded the public mind.

I reported myself to the Chief Medical Officer, and left a card on the Commandant's daughter. How well do I remember her first question—"Well, what do you think of Auckland?"

I stood up, looked out of the window, and said, "Beautiful! It is a thousand pities, however, the North Shore is not planted."

I turned round, looked at the circle in the drawing-room, and said to myself, "These people think me a prig. I wonder why?"

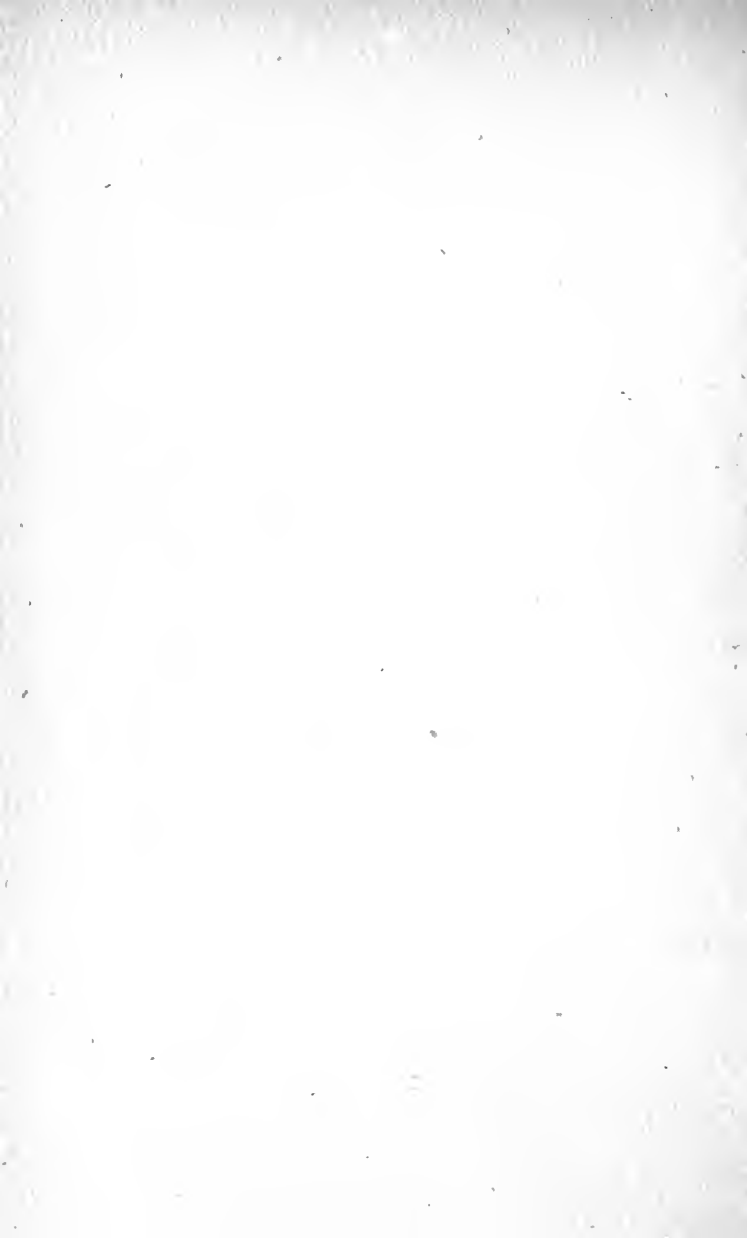
I was detailed for duty at the General Hospital in Auckland City, and settled down to my work. In a few days a very nice, gentlemanly man—a brother medical officer—said to me, "I have my orders for the seat of war. Your arrival has played the devil with everything. I am making love to the sweetest girl in the world. Long before my return (if I ever return) some combatant officer will have carried her off."

I felt the cold shivers run down my back, and the whistle of the Maori bullet in my ear. I muttered to myself, "Blood is blood," and said to him,—

“ My dear fellow, I am dying to go to the seat of war. I am a poor devil of an Irishman, accustomed to a turbulent people. I have seen the lady : she is a beauty. For her sweet sake, I'll be off and get tomahawked. I will volunteer for active service. You have friends : you can manage the rest.”

And he did.

OFF TO THE WAR



III

I WAS ordered to the seat of war, and paraded with the rest in the barrack square preparatory to the march to Onehunga. I had on my undress staff frock-coat ; I have it still. It would not go within six inches of buttoning round my waist now.

The men of the 65th who paraded were shaggy, bearded giants, roughly clad, with their arms in excellent order. In comparison, I looked a dandy, and knew it. I had served recently with the Rifles. The Brigade-Major, mounted on a rough ten-pound animal, rode straight at me, pulled his horse on his haunches, swung him a bit to the left, and shouted out,—

“You think yourself a swell, sir. I am Brigade-Major Slack. You are going to Taranaki. Tell Colonel Gold, sir, he is bitching the whole war. As for Colonel Murray, I shall have him broke, sir, I shall

have him broke. I have reported the whole business to the Horse Guards."

He rode off. I smiled, and ranked him a shingle short. We embarked in the ss. *Airedale*. She was so uncommonly low in the water and so crowded with men that I felt sure she would topple over. With every roll of the boat the soldiers on deck felt their left or their right. The weather fortunately was fine. We arrived off New Plymouth early in the morning, and landed in surf-boats. I was met on the beach by a cheerful-looking young officer with 65 on his forage cap, who said, "You had better go up to the mess-room, and have some breakfast."

I inquired my way, and was directed to a long, two-storied shed; walked upstairs, and entered a bare wooden room with a long trestle table in it. It was apparently empty. A corner was cut off by a rough paper screen.

I walked up to a shabby mirror over the mantelpiece, arranged my hair, and settled my silk stock. I had landed in my undress frock-coat,—in fact, I had never had it off since I left Auckland,—and felt very uncomfortable. A stage-whisper broke on the silence of the room :—

"Begorra, Mick, here is another of them

patent-leather French soldiers, just like Captain Richards of the Light Bobs."

To explain this, it is necessary to say that a blue frock-coat is not a regimental uniform.

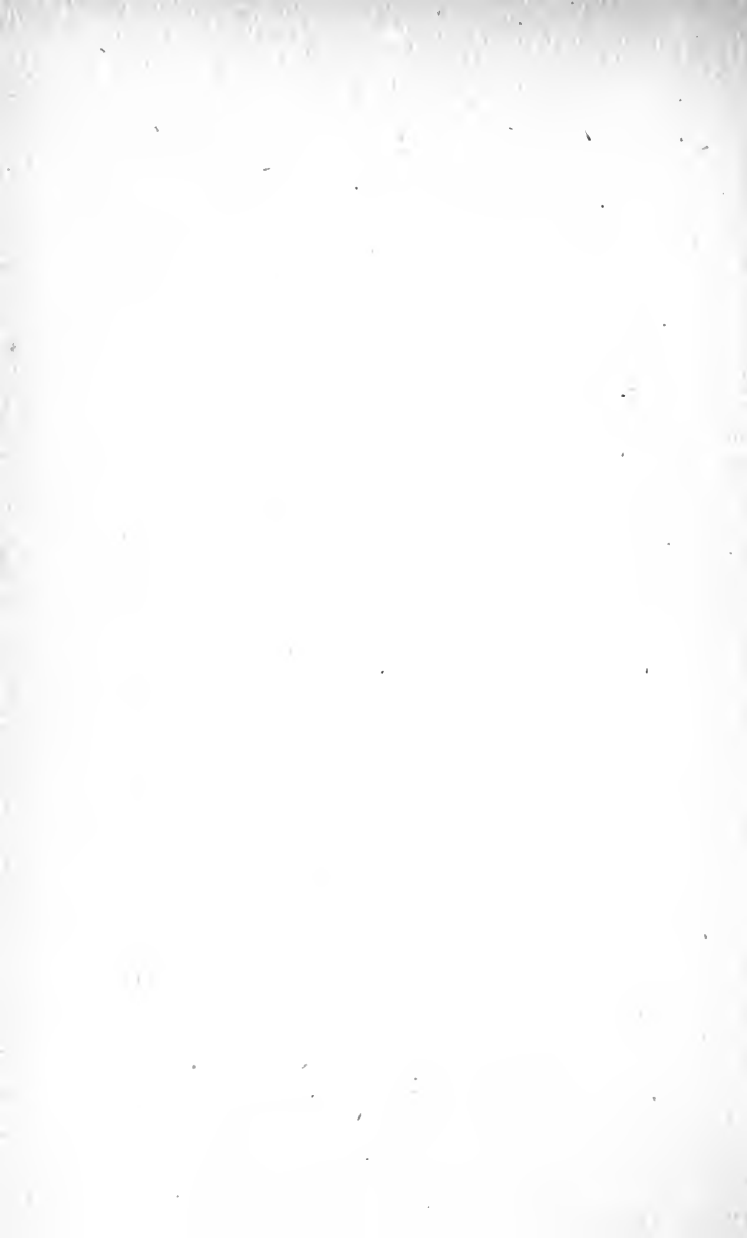
I was a staff-assistant surgeon, and therefore had no regimental uniform.

I glanced through a chink in the screen, and saw a pair of honest grey eyes contemplating me with scorn. Without turning round, and whilst still arranging my hair, I called for stirabout and milk. There was a smothered guffaw behind the screen. A fine, handsome soldier walked out, and said,—

"Begorra, sir, there is no stirabout and milk in this country at all, at all; but I can order for you rashers and eggs."

"Rashers and eggs by all means let it be."

We were both quite grave, but each had in his eye an amused twinkle that was more eloquent than words. This incident got about amongst the soldiers, and made me free of the 65th Foot.



SOLDIER'S ACCOUNT OF THE
WAR



IV

NEXT day I put away my undress frock-coat, and wore a blue jumper and a forage cap to show my rank. I now give you a soldier's account of the war up to the date of my arrival :—

“This was a bit of a ruction about land. Outsiders had nothing to do with it. We could have managed it all ourselves, but we were not going to be hurried. After we had time to get warm there would have been some fine fighting. Then we would have settled our quarrels, had a big feed together, and gone on again, in a comfortable, easy manner. You see, the 65th has been in New Zealand about eighteen years. We all talk the language, more or less. Indeed, some of us have close relations amongst the Maori. Whether or not, they are a decent, civil-spoken race, and we know many of their chiefs and people as well as we do our messmates.

“Well, Wiremu Kingi insulted Governor

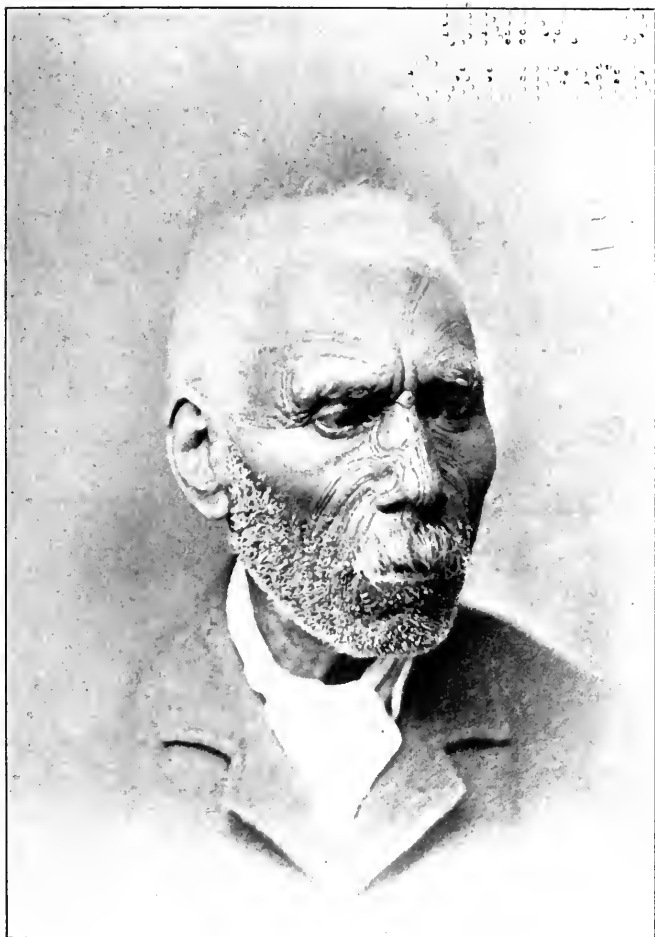
Gore Brown by saying, 'The Waitara is mine. I will not allow its sale.' When requested to talk the matter over with the Governor, Wiremu said,—

“‘It is for me to talk, for others to keep silent.’

“He then left the meeting in a dudgeon, and walked off with his followers.

“Governor Gore Brown considered the Queen in his person insulted, and ordered the survey of the land and the completion of the purchase from Te Teira, who was friendly to the Pakeha, and a great ruffian. Wiremu Kingi built a pa on the disputed block, and we were sent out to storm the pa. All this was in perfect good blood. Wiremu Kingi knew we were going to attack, and some of his men marched with us when we were on the way to surprise it.

“The pa was not a fighting stockade; it was what the Maori call a ‘land title pa.’ Wiremu had defended his title by the erection of the stockade. Just before we arrived to storm the pa, Wiremu Kingi, according to Maori custom, evacuated his ‘land title pa,’ and went off to his fighting fortress. We, under orders, invested the land title pa, which we all knew was empty, and at the word of command stormed it gallantly.



WIREMU KINGI

“We then put up a land title fortification and returned to New Plymouth. Everything was going on nicely till some members of another tribe, the Ngatiruanui, who were also adversaries of Wiremu Kingi's, murdered some white people to the south of New Plymouth. Had we then gone to Wiremu Kingi, who was a Ngatiawa, and asked him to put off the quarrel about the land, and come and help us punish the Ngatiruanui, all would have been well.

“An expedition was organized, to withdraw our white people from the Southern districts where the murders had taken place.

“The Maori had built a land title pa at Waireka, just on the side of the high-road. It was thought desirable to have the relief party pass round by the sea-coast, whilst the 65th watched the Waireka pa.

“When men are sent out to fight Maori, they should be told what they have to do, and ordered not to return till they have finished it. Colonel Murray, who commanded the 65th, received positive orders to return by nightfall. The Militia and Volunteers who had gone round by the sea-beach fell in with some Maori and fired on them. An irregular skirmish took place, a great deal of noise was made, and very

little harm done. I was in Charley Urquhart's company, and saw the whole proceedings from the top of the hill. When it began to grow dark, Colonel Murray ordered the troops under his command to retire. It was a fine night. The soldiers thought something might turn up in the way of diversion, and as they were scattered about in skirmishing order, it was difficult to collect them together.

“At last they consented to hear the recall, and marched in an irregular manner along the high-road towards New Plymouth.

“On the way they met the sailors who had landed to cut into the sport. We chaffered and hob-nobbed with them in the dark, and told them there was an empty pa just near the high-road, full of curios and pigs and sport of every kind; and they rushed on. When the sailors got out of the bush they saw the stockade in the open, and the officers and men all rushed right at it. A few old Maori, seeing us retire, had returned to the pa—which was a land title and not a fighting pa—to cook some potatoes. These fired a volley on the sailors, and then ran away. One or two Maori were killed, and several sailors wounded.

“This was the real cause of the war. These Maori were Ngatiawa. Few of our people

knew one tribe from another. We had attacked Wiremu Kingi's tribe because the Ngatiruanui had murdered our people.

"Wiremu Kingi's people could have murdered all our settlers before morning without difficulty, but did not do so, because, according to Maori custom, the Ngatiawa had no right to erect a stockade on our land. Waireka was our land. We had not only bought it, but cropped it, and held it for many years. The Ngatiawa knew this well, and only put up a stockade as a protest against our occupation of the Waitara. Our farmers who grazed their cattle up to the very line of the Maori knew it also, and both Maori and white men used to smoke their pipes in the evening, sitting on the logs around, and some of the white men from a neighbourly feeling helped to hump the heavy timber needed for the corner-posts of that pa.

"Well, the newspapers made a great racket about all this, said the 65th had run away, and that had it not been for the bluejackets the whole country-side would have been murdered and New Plymouth sacked.

"We said nothing, but felt *pouri* (Maori for 'sad'). In a short time the women and children came in from the out settlements.

Not a hair of one of their heads had been touched ; not a particle of their furniture, or a single head of their stock had been looted.

“ Soon a wing of the 40th Foot arrived from Melbourne, under the command of Major Nelson, and with the Naval Brigade were camped on the Waitara. Communication with this force was kept open by a little steamer, *The Tasmanian Maid*, which crossed the bar of the river, and kept up supplies. All this time the route by land was practically open, and settlers came and went by the Bell Block, as if we were all at peace ; but our military commanders either did not know this, or care to admit it. The fact is they were all quarrelling amongst themselves, and nobody knew what the next orders from the Governor in Auckland might bring forth.

“ Major Nelson was a fiery old field-officer who longed for distinction. He was egged on by Commodore Seymour, who had landed his men, and itched to surpass the achievement of his junior officer who had stormed the Waireka pa.

“ Major Nelson sent word that he proposed to storm the Puketekauere pa, named the day, and warned Colonel Gold, who was the senior officer, to support him by a land march, so as

to cut off the retreating Maori on his left flank. Now, Captain Richards of the 40th Foot had come down as a staff-officer, and when our mess-room was pretty full, swaggered up to the looking-glass, arranged his undress frock-coat, curled his moustachios, and said: 'Damn me! There is no pa in the country I could not take with my company of Light Bobs.'

"There was no remark made. As soon as he had left, the word was passed round the regiment, 'Captain Richards and the 40th shall have their chance. We will not spoil the sport.'

"When Colonel Gold, who was in command of our regiment, and the senior officer, received Major Nelson's demand for support, he stormed violently, and swore he would forbid the attack. Though he was not aware of Captain Richards' boast—for he was a married officer, and did not frequent our mess—the regiment tipped him the wink; so he sanctioned the attack, and promised the support.

"Puketekauere was a position of great natural strength. Two small elevations ran into each other, joined by a smooth saddle. The rear and right were protected by a raupo swamp. Raupo swamps are impassable, though they look inviting. The front was easily approach-

able even by heavy guns. The left rested on the Waitara River. As is common in river formations, these little eminences had a curve in the middle. They presented the form of an elongated kidney, with its back to the raupo swamp. The front hillock was higher and less flat on the top than its fellow, and the bend in the saddle enabled musketry from the lesser hillock to command the approach to the other.

“Major Nelson had no real knowledge of the country or the character of his antagonist. The Maori built a stockade on the larger hillock, ran up his flag and danced his defiance on the open hillock that led to it. This was more than human nature could stand. Major Nelson fumed and swore until he received the necessary permission from Colonel Gold. He then started off in the dead of the night: Captain Messenger with his Grenadier Company and Lieutenant Brooks with some Light Bobs. The men carried their top-coats, 120 rounds of ammunition, and two days’ provision. These were to travel all night, and, at the break of day, to storm the stockade from the rear, as the Major with the guns assaulted it from the front.

“Captain Messenger once despatched, the die was cast. There was great preparation, and

before dawn off set the main body under Major Nelson and Commodore Seymour with the heavy guns. Nothing but dead silence prevailed. The surprise was complete. The twenty-four pounders, the mortars, and the twelve pounders opened fire. The stockade splintered like matchwood. The assault was ordered, and with a ringing cheer the soldiers and sailors vied with each other to get in first. There was merely a dropping fire from the Maori, and victory was certain. As soon as our men got up to the stockade, a withering fire was opened from the lesser flanking hillock. The stockade was only a draw. The Maori had rifle-pitted the whole of the saddle and the lesser hillock. As soon as the true position was unmasked, the recall was sounded. The wounded were picked up, the guns were unlimbered. The battle was lost, and for all practical purposes Captain Messenger's force was left to look after itself. The Grenadiers, under Captain Messenger, had at last found the rear of the pa. Worn out with fatigue from slaving all night through bush and swamp, they lay down a little to recover themselves. As soon as they heard the firing, up they rose with bounding hearts, and plunged into the swamp as the only road to victory. They threw off

their coats, peeled off their tunics, discarded everything but their arms, and pressed on. It was no use. It was here Lieutenant Brooks, up to his waist in water, defended himself like a Paladin with his sword, disabling many an adversary until at length he was tomahawked from behind. Captain Messenger, finding the feat impossible, got together as many of his men as he could, beat to his right, skirted the swamp and rushed the Maori rifle-pits from the rear, where the swamp was more passable, and surprised the Maori who were looking to their front, engaged with our men. Thus he carried out his instructions and rejoined the main body, which was in full retreat.

“In short, it was a disastrous defeat, and it seems doubtful whether the 40th, which had in the action the flower of its chivalry, will ever get over it. The 65th Foot, under command of Colonel Gold, marched at four o'clock in the morning to cut off the retreat of the Maori on the left. They found the Waingongora River, from recent forest rains in the hills, flooded bank high, and, as they had neither boats nor means for constructing pontoons, they halted, and sought to open communications with Major Nelson by a mounted trooper, whose horse swam the river. This delay did not

seem of much importance at the time. Neither was it in reality of any great importance, as it was well known to us that the Maori, if defeated, would retire up the river to Puke-Rangiora, rather than trust themselves in the open ordinarily accessible to our troops. As a matter of fact, Colonel Gold thought Major Nelson had postponed the attack, as he ought to have known by the flooded state of the Waitara that the Waingongora, which served the same watershed, must be impassable to our forces. The general impression in both camps was that Major Nelson had neither expected nor much desired Colonel Gold's co-operation. He meant to score off his own bat, secure a C.B. and a brevet lieutenant-colonelcy, terminate the war to the glory of his own regiment, and return in triumph to his own headquarters in Melbourne."

This is the end of the soldier's story. I gathered it from all branches of Her Majesty's forces, naval, military, volunteers, and militia, and from all ranks of officers and non-commissioned officers engaged in these operations under the grade of field-officer. I have narrated faithfully and without any intentional colouring exactly what I heard, and I knew the

intimate thoughts of the soldiers. I belonged to no corps in particular, never having been a regimental officer, and the wounded of all corps came equally under my care. If this narrative should offend any one, I am sorry. It is the truth as I saw it, and ought to be told.

ENTRENCHED AT WAIREKA



V

BEFORE proceeding, I ask myself again, what is the object I have in view? Well, I wish to remind the New Zealander of to-day, whether white or brown, that the Maori of my time was a gentleman—a man of superior talent and undoubted courage, who knew more about strategy, fortifications, defence and attack than our army had learned either at Woolwich or in India. Also, I would do justice to the British soldier.

Soon after my arrival in New Plymouth, a wing of the 12th regiment, under Major Hutchins, disembarked in the roadstead. A flying column, consisting of some companies of the 12th and 40th, some Royal Engineers and a few artillerymen, was despatched to encamp on the Waireka, the land on which the first engagement between the Maoris and Volunteers had been fought. I was put in medical charge of the wing. General Pratt was now

in command, and all dispositions were carried out with the formality observed in a European campaign. Although we were passing through a peaceable, open, well-cultivated country, skirmishers were thrown out, a rearguard formed, our baggage waggons were protected by outlying skirmishers, and we proceeded with all possible caution, as though every hedge, hillock, and break concealed a lurking enemy. This had the worst possible effect on the *morale* of our men, all new to the country.

Arrived at Waireka, we proceeded hastily to entrench ourselves, as if danger was imminent. Before nightfall the lines of our earthworks had been drawn, mounds raised, trenches dug, tents pitched, all within a fortified space. So afraid of a surprise were we that, although we had double pickets out, we had not dared to encamp near either wood or water. In order to secure water from a neighbouring stream, we detached on each occasion an armed party of thirty or forty men to cover the advance and retreat of our water-carriers. Next day we commenced sinking wells. We continued this operation for days. The deeper we sank, the drier the ground, and never once did we turn up either gravel or stone. The soldiers began to think that the devil was in the country.

They had never seen the like before. Finally the Engineers declared the land waterless, and the fatigue party broke off this work. Our daily expeditions for water were in time extended to search for potatoes. Had it not been for the frequent night-alarms, given by the outlying sentries, followed by the cry, "Man the defences," our lives would have been pleasant enough. All this over-cautious watchfulness had a depressing effect on our men.

By degrees our pickets and scattered handfuls of men went farther afield, until at length many of us began to doubt the existence of any enemy. I made one of these excursions with two or three brother officers. We found on this occasion the body of a farmer which had been shoved into a drain. The settler had been tomahawked in the head, legs, and arms. This was evidently the work of the Ngati-ruanui, who were bitterly savage against us. The appearance of this unfortunate man, who had evidently been surprised whilst examining his homestead, gave me "quite a turn."

A few days after this some Maori appeared in our immediate neighbourhood, and Major Hutchins ordered a reconnaissance. About 150 of our men were thrown into skirmishing

order, and instructed to feel their way under cover of some gorse hedges, with the object of getting between the enemy and some neighbouring ridges of elevated land.

It was my duty to accompany the force, and as the troops opened out from the centre and extended to both sides, I found myself on the most distant—the left flank of the line of skirmishers.

As soon as the Maori saw our object, they opened fire. Our bugles sounded "Take cover." Our men immediately fell flat, crept up anyhow to some gorse hedges, and fired blindly through the fences at anything or nothing. As I lay prone on the ground, clutching absolutely—not figuratively—at the blades of grass, the balls ripped up the sward around me. I first drew in one leg, then another, then tucked in my arm, anon tried to bury my head in my shoulders, or my buttock in my back. It was useless. There was no escape. My soul was frozen within me. My orderly, Corporal Prince, was lying beside me. I knew nothing of his state of mind. The bugle sounded. My heart stood still, then the blood bounded back to my brain.

"What is it, Corporal?"

"Call for the medical officer, sir."

“Malbrouk s'en va-t-en guerre.” An electric flash went through my brain. Have you the courage to neglect your sacred duty? look in the face of your comrades with the brand of a coward on your heart? No. No. A thousand times no. I arose, alert and smiling. Corporal Prince and I marched with coolness and dignity from one end of the line of skirmishers to the other, almost the only persons exposed to the fire of the enemy. I looked after the wounded without cover and under fire. Now that I had something to do, my fear was gone. The instinct of the doctor was uppermost. The wounded on either side were alike interesting to me. Apparently, if both parties had been firing at me, it would not have made much difference. Training is a wonderful human moulder: I am certain martyrdom is nothing to persons educated to look for it.

As soon as the strength of the Maori was revealed, the retreat was sounded and our men returned to camp. Very little mischief was inflicted on either side. The range was too long for Maori smooth-bores. They were chiefly spent balls that frightened the wits out of me. I happened to have been at a point where the fire from two angles converged. The trajectory of our rifles was probably too

high to hurt any one, for the Maori were up to their chins in rifle-pits.

This little affair left a bad impression on the Maori. A *reconnaissance en force* seems a fine military exhibition, when defined in words: with the Maori the mere formal dignity of a withdrawal amounts to nothing. A single Maori as long as he was in view would feel bound in honour to retire with formal dignity, though pursued by a whole army. But ours seemed the retreat of a powerful force. The Maori concluded we were afraid. Had our men on this occasion been pushed on, and allowed to put their fortunes to the test of battle, it is no exaggeration to say millions of money would have been saved and thousands of lives.

Major Hutchins dared not risk it. Had the attack failed, he would have been cashiered. Had it succeeded, he would have been tried by court-martial and reprimanded. His instructions did not admit of an aggressive movement.

About a week or ten days after this the Maori, with their women, children, and baggage, were seen pouring over a tortuous mountain quite near us. Their formation was so extended that a company of our men could have

destroyed the whole lot. Before Major Hutchins could move a finger, this incident had to be reported in full to headquarters and then explained and the explanation elucidated.

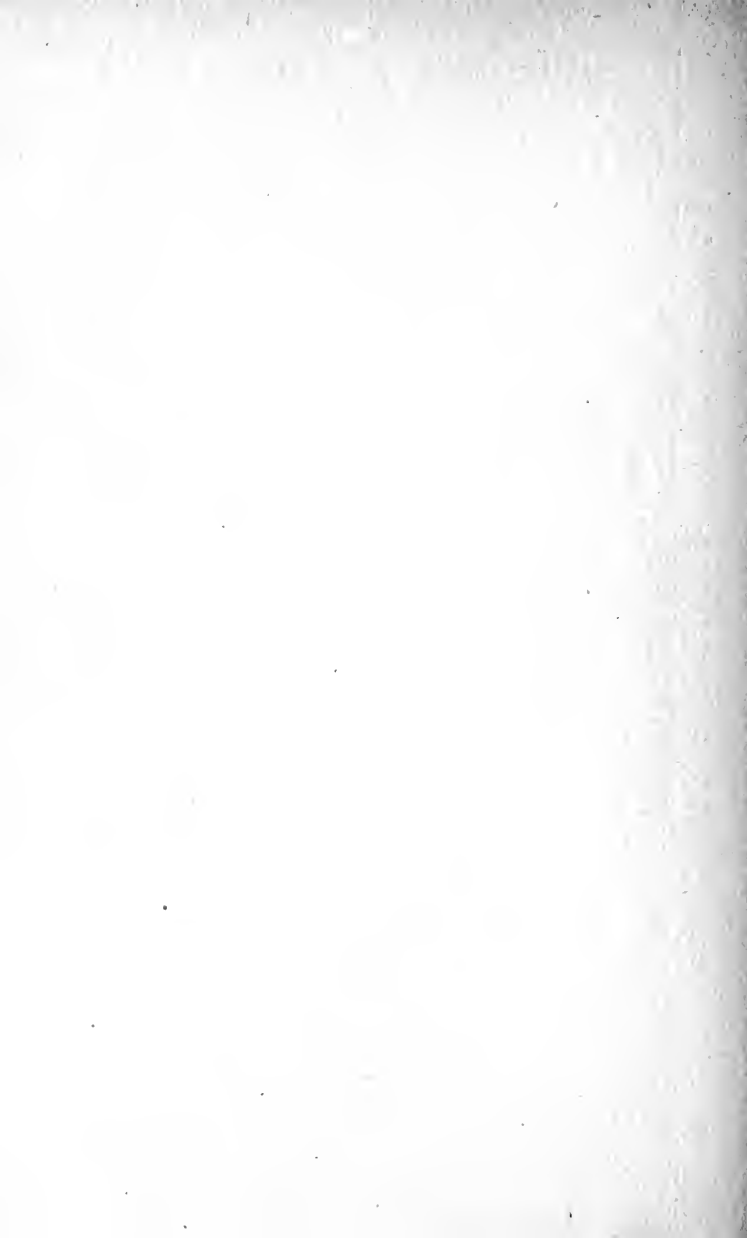
About four o'clock in the day General Pratt with an overpowering force arrived at our camp. The Maori had concluded their march about half-past one, and were out of sight over the range of hills. I saw the general and staff on their arrival. They cross-examined every one. My own opinion is they did not believe a word of Major Hutchins's narrative. Maori cross that range of hills! Where are they? Why, we were in town the whole time, and never saw one of them! The Taranaki volunteers crowded our camp in numbers. Our mess spent about a week's pay feeding them and allaying their thirst. As they went away I heard them say, "It is a wonder those soldiers cannot fight. They are awfully decent fellows." We all knew their opinion of us, but did not care. Soldiers in any case are hospitable. The rough aspect and cheery familiarity of these volunteers more than compensated us. General Pratt with his formidable force withdrew in an hour or so, and we returned to our usual avocations.

In a few days the Maori erected earthworks

to our left front 800 yards distant, to our left 600 yards distant, and to our left rear about 500 yards. We took no notice of them. One fine morning they opened fire simultaneously from these works. We stood to arms, making no reply except by occasional sharpshooters from our flanking angles. The Maori fire had no effect on us. As our right and right front were open, we continued to draw water from the neighbouring creek and armed parties foraged for potatoes and vegetables coast-wise. We had occasional skirmishes with the enemy, who laid ambuscades for us; but our modes were too uniformly guarded to admit easily of surprises. Once we surprised an ambuscade consisting of about six or eight Maori. They all got off, as usual; but one poor fellow, as he was vaulting over a gate 800 yards distant, was caught by an Enfield bullet in an extraordinary way. Our musketry instructor, when running full pelt, dropped on his knee, fixed his sight at 800 yards, pulled the trigger, when down fell the sable warrior. He was up again and bundled off on one leg and two arms whilst you could cry "Jack Robinson," and left nothing behind him except his mat.

The effect of this siege was to restrict our liberty. We had double sentries on our inner

defences each night, and were constantly aroused by the firing of our out-pickets. After a little time every one got weary of the restraint. Our men began to loaf around outside our fortification, the Maori firing at them all the time. One day whilst Major Hutchins was walking about in a fit of affected abstraction, a few of our men began to kick a football. Presently a large portion of the garrison off duty joined in the sport. The Maori fired volley after volley at our men, but as their distance at this point was 800 yards, not a single shot took effect. They soon left off firing, and looked at us over their rifle-pits. My own opinion is that, had not our men been withdrawn by the sergeants to their evening meal, the Maori would soon have joined in the game. And certainly they would have been made welcome. At this time there was no animosity between us. A day or two later the Maori deserted their position. We were free of the whole country-side, and enjoyed our liberty prodigiously.

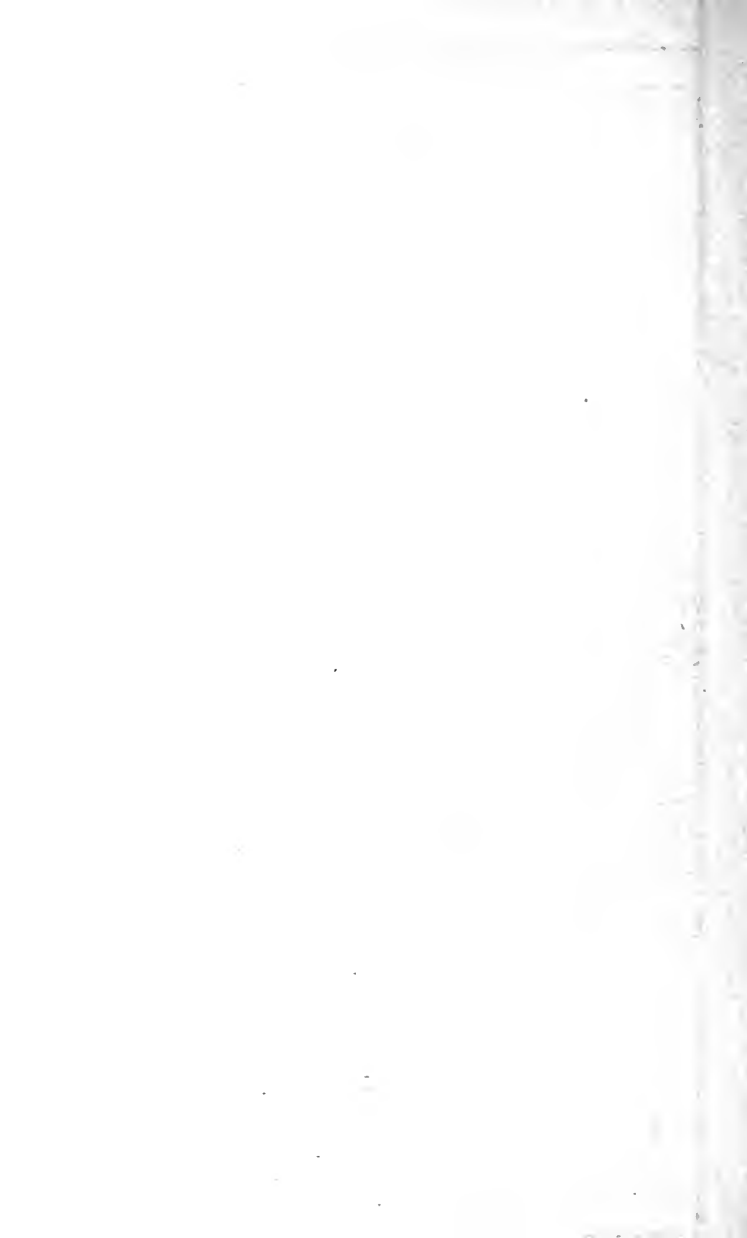


Mercury B.



A

C



ATTACK ON A STOCKADE



VI

SOON we were ordered to destroy our fortification and retire for the protection of New Plymouth, which was never for a moment in danger. All settlers were ordered within the fortified lines of the town. The women and children were sent to Nelson. Our soldiers were harassed during the long winter nights patrolling a circuit within which a hostile Maori was never seen. My own experience was that I, in company with three other officers, slept every night about a quarter of a mile outside our farthest pickets in a house belonging to Major Atkinson, and we were never disturbed ; but within the fortified area the alarms and precautions were equally great.

As soon as everything was made snug against the surprises of an enemy who was not such a fool as to trust himself miles away from his native forests and ravines, a great expedition was organized against the Maori camped near the Tataramika block on European land.

The Maori, when he goes on a warlike expedition, casts off all his European clothing. The object is to keep it safe from brambles, when crawling through the forest. Bare-footed and bare-legged, he wears only a flax mat kept by a band which crosses his chest. He carries his double-barrelled gun in one hand, his ammunition in a pouch across his shoulders. His tomahawk he uses as a walking stick. He either carries no food, or, if any, a little fermented maize in a pocket of the mat. Thus accoutred, he can do, marching with a loose leg, about five miles an hour, and keep it up on occasion for a long time. The soldier on the Tataramika expedition carried three days' provisions, a water-bottle in a country where streams were our chief impediment, an overcoat or blanket, or both, 120 rounds of ammunition, a rifle and bayonet. As soon as any expedition was over, the N.C. officers checked off all these accoutrements, and if any were missing surcharged the soldier even down to a pair of worn-out socks if lost.

The weapon carried was a muzzle-loader, the bullet a tight fit, so that much ramming was often necessary. On the march the bayonet when fixed, or when hanging on the hip, was caught in everything. If the rifle was brought

to the shoulder, the trajectory of the bullet was too high, failing accurate sighting and steady aim. If fired from the hip, the bullet generally ploughed up the ground about fifteen or twenty yards ahead. The soldier felt he was in a strait waistcoat put up to be fired at by the Maori. The great expedition appeared miles long. Twenty-four bullocks dragging each a sixty-eight pounder. We had two with us, and were inordinately proud of them. In addition we had three or four twenty-four pounders and a couple of large mortars. We were quite sure of teaching the Maori a lesson. Could we only get to the Tataramika, the war would be over in a month or two.

Well, we did get there. We covered each flank of the advancing column with clouds of skirmishers, and they did skirmish, too. I was with them. I wore no impediment but a small Colt's revolver, and I often skirmished on my head and back and hands and knees. As for the progress of the soldier, it was what the Scotch call "just redeeculous."

"Spread yourselves out, men, spread yourselves out," was the cheery order of the officers, as they tumbled about like the rest. It sounded well, and was heard occasionally by the staff-officers; but there was often no

room on the cliffs and the breaks to spread in. Thirty Maori could have surprised in many places any portion of the line, shot the bullocks, crumpled up our arrangements, and laughed at us. The Maori were, I think, in the neighbouring scrub, smoking their pipes and laughing at us. I do not in the least wonder they did not fire. First, our men were like a lot of children out blackberrying ; second, the Maori had built three lovely pas, and wanted us to have a look at them. They knew how easily we were turned back, and in my opinion, had our guns stuck, would have joyously lent a hand under the protection of a flag of truce to extricate our artillery.

They were just as anxious to see the big guns in action as we were. The only difference was : we believed in the arms, the Maori laughed at them.

Arrived at our goal, we found a lovely plateau, with a fringe of forest lining its inland margin. We pitched our tents with their backs to the sea, hauled our guns to our front, and despatched a large fatigue party to run up light earthworks on our right and left. The staff-officers galloped about, took hurried sketches, measured distances, and consulted together. It was much more interesting than

any review I had ever seen. There were three stockades on the edge, as it were, of a large oval dish. The only curious feature was that from our position we could only see the tops of forest trees. There were no bowls or stems of trees visible. The foliage just rocked and played in the light sea breeze.

The staff seemed puzzled which of the three stockades to attack. There was not a Maori to be seen. Finally it was decided to attack the central stockade, and keep the others under observation. The sixty-eights, twenty-fours, and mortars opened fire. The skirmishers on the right and left lay flat on the ground. It was magnificent; it was war at last. An occasional Maori sharpshooter picked off one of our men, otherwise there was no reply from the pa. We hammered this stockade for twenty-four hours. At length the engineers, after an examination with their binoculars, announced a practical breach. There was a hush and a stir. The storming party was told off. The distance was certainly not more than 400 yards. The word was given. Suddenly there rose up from the ground about 120 men. If you have ever seen hounds, whilst still fresh, rush at a fox near in sight, all in a cluster, straining against

each other for first place, such was the storming party. It was a mercy from heaven there were no Maori in the pa. Children with arms in their hands could have mown our men down by dozens. Arrived at the stockade, though unopposed, there was no one soldier could get in for some time. The Maori had rifle-pitted the earth in front of the palisade. The rifle-pits had arched roofs of green timber covered with soft earth and fern. On the level of the plateau a sort of open wicker-work window, from four to six inches deep, lit up and ventilated the rifle-pits. The Maori had stood inside the rifle-pits, poked their fowling-pieces through the wicker window, and pulled the trigger without exposing themselves. That was the reason why all our wounded men were hit in the legs. From these rifle-pits covered galleries led to the rear, and were lost in the forests.

Not a single shell or roundshot had entered these rifle-pits. The whole of our fire, so far as the Maori were concerned, was merely a pyrotechnic display. The stockade was crescent-shaped, lost itself at each end in a sharp declivity. It had been built of young forest trees with the sap in them. They were fixed upright in the ground, and branches were

lashed across with green flax. The space between the double row of cross saplings was filled with loose earth. Our shot and shell had passed clean through. The jagged, shattered timber merely waggled about once it was broken, held in position above and below by green flax ties. Undefended, and all as it was, none of our men succeeded in getting either over or through the stockade until the sappers came along with axes and cut through the flax lashings.

The British soldier is not much of a fool. He was strictly forbidden to stray from the main body, and the storming party was recalled without being allowed to explore the pa. But the storming party had seen quite enough, and graphically detailed their observations. Forthwith the commanders, staff-officers, and engineers were looked on with profound contempt. A panic seemed to have seized the general. If the Maori have deserted their works, when and why? How shall we ever get back to New Plymouth? There are defiles on the road where a few hundred men could destroy a whole army.

On our retreat nearly the whole of the force was thrown into skirmishing order to protect our guns and baggage. We got back

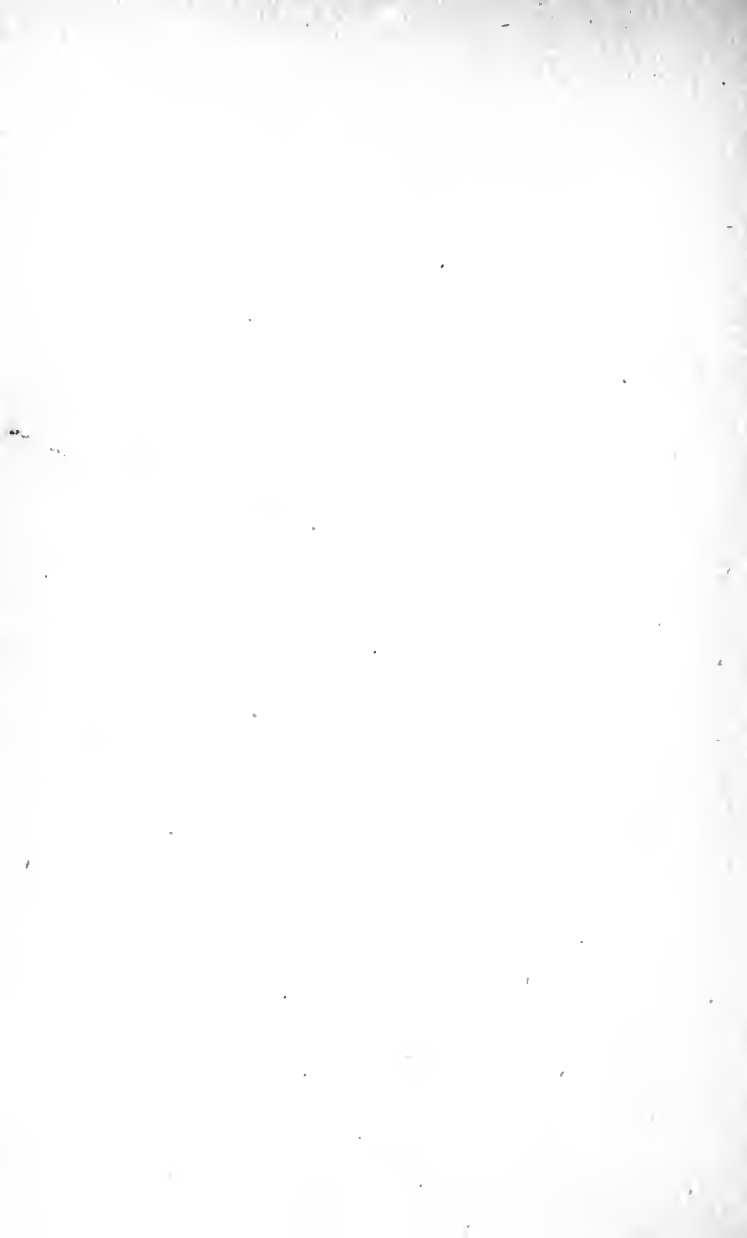
to New Plymouth in safety, and hid ourselves behind our stockades, which, by the way, were so extended as to be nearly useless. A body of irregular horsemen could certainly have broken through them.

It was at Tataramika that I saw the following illustration of the value of our small arms. We had a handful of sailors from the Naval Brigade along with us. They were armed with Colt's naval revolvers and sabres. Sailors ashore are the jolliest fighting men imaginable. They, of course, expected to be joined in the assault when the happy moment came, and they set to work to prepare their implements of war. At that time Colt's revolvers required caps. The nipples for the caps were small and fine. The sailor's thumbs and fingers are coarse, the skin thick, and the sense of touch blunted. This was the procedure. The sailor sat on his hunkers, steadied the revolver between his two big-toes, and then, with the aid of two pins, one in each hand, put the cap on each nipple. When I saw this, and viewed the sailor's humorous contempt for the size of the revolver bullet, I quite believed what I had heard of the sailors who had helped to storm Puketekaure under Commodore Seymour.

My informant assured me the sailors first emptied all the chambers of their revolvers, then threw them away, and, yelling out "Board!" drew their sabres and rushed at the stockade.



SIR DONALD McLEAN'S STORY



VII

THE following narrative was related to me by Sir Donald McLean, the greatest Maori scholar of our time, with the single exception of Judge Maning, the author of *Old New Zealand*, who in curious lore was probably Sir Donald's superior. In variety of useful political knowledge and general acquaintanceship with the outer life of the various tribes, Sir Donald McLean was without an equal. Donald was a Highlander, about six feet two inches, with a broad, expansive chest, a flat, strong forehead, a blue-grey, open eye, a genial manner, and an affectionate nature. All this was dominated by an ambitious temper, and the wonderful Scottish talent for economy and reticence.

A chat with Sir Donald would convince any one that he was a guileless character. He was, too, in a sense. His influence with the Maori was due to his imperturbability. He could beat them at their own game of

"*Taihoa*" (*i.e.* "Wait a bit"). Yet he was a most touchy, irritable, excitable man. When he had a little whisky in, and was at ease with his company—which on such occasions never included a Maori—Donald would jump on the table and dance a Highland sword-dance with blazing enthusiasm.

What a race these Scots are! What a fine fellow in his heart and brain was our Sir Donald!

In order to guarantee Sir Donald's story of Waitini, I want you to see the Scotchman at work. Donald McLean was Native Land Purchase Commissioner.

Land for settlement was indispensable. Often the Maori would not sell, yet if you gave Sir Donald his own time and did not interfere the land was always bought.

Donald seduced the Maori into talking the proposal over—just a *korero* (debate). He sent the chiefs some flour and sugar, passed round the word among all the neighbouring *hapus* (tribes) that at such a time "there would be a talk about the land."

Maori custom made it indispensable for a great chief to entertain all guests. All the Maori, no matter how distantly related, congregated to hear the talk (*korero*). Some

of them travelled hundreds of miles, and came accompanied by their wives and children. The great chiefs were thus eaten out of house and home, and had no alternative but to sell the land. There was one inveterately obstinate chief who would do nothing. A great *korero* was engineered against him. He was the only rich man left. He could not get out of the *korero*. His *mana* (i.e. prestige) was at stake. Donald McLean had nothing to do with engineering the *korero*. Oh dear, no. Donald's *mana* was also at stake. This Maori was not a Queen's native. He was a turbulent outsider. Donald would have nothing to say to him in the way of business. The *hāpus* crowded in from all sides. The rich man had plenty; he did not care. He was a great chief; in any case he meant to show his power.

After a little time the tempter said, "A great chief like you ought not to be afraid of a mere Queen's servant (*cookie*) like Donald McLean. Let him be invited, that he may do homage to our Tino Rangatira." Donald was asked to the feast. Donald sat and smoked and listened for three months. The Tino Rangatira could not turn him away. Such a course was against all rules. The others could

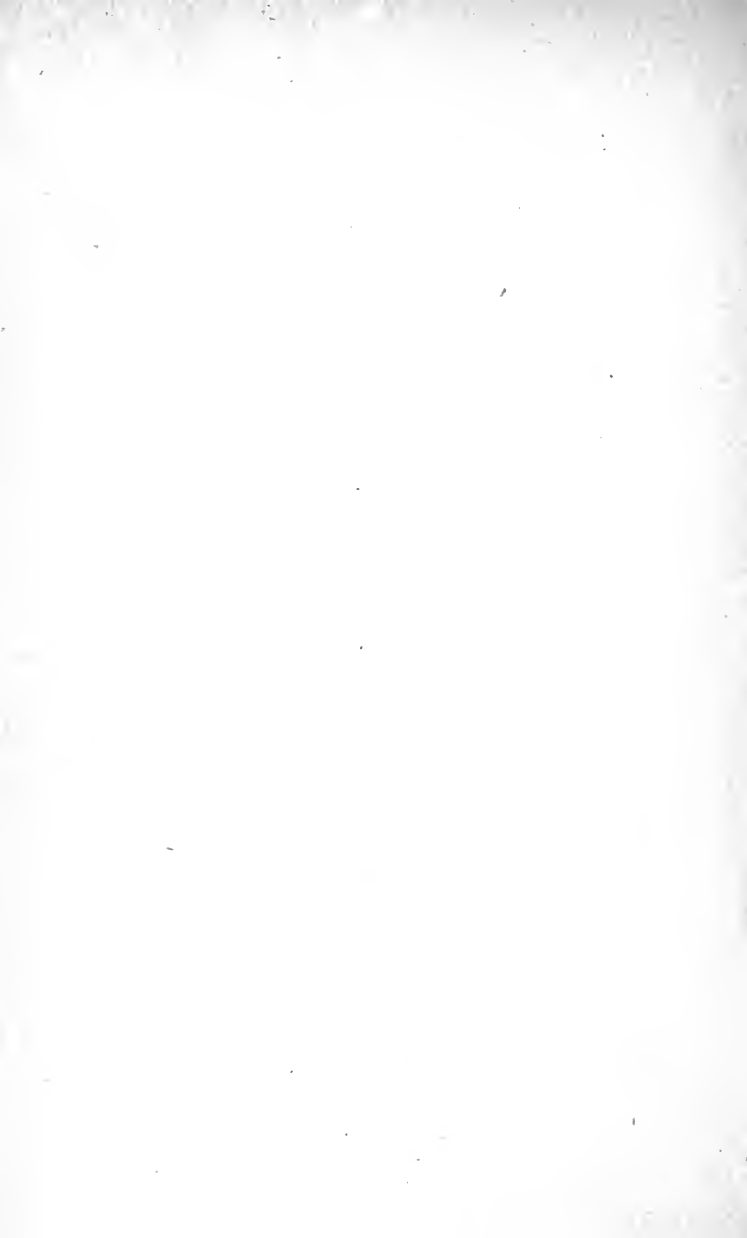
not leave till Sir Donald left. It would be underbred to do so; besides, they were comfortable where they were. Not a word ever came out of Donald's mouth about the land. He narrated legends of the fallen greatness of the various *hapus* and tribes, and acquired an intimate knowledge of the personal history of every man of importance present. In an ordinary conversation he would say, "By the bye, Piri Piri, do you remember when you were crossing a branch of the Opotiki River in the Whakatane district in the month of April, '54—I think it was on a Wednesday. When cooling your foot (which you had struck against a jagged stump of rata) in the mudhole, you were bitten by a large crayfish, and thought it was the 'Taniwha'?" Now, Piri Piri, who was an utter stranger to McLean, and had travelled hundreds of miles to be present at the Runanga, was duly impressed. In time, many of the Maori from distant parts began to think that McLean had the second sight. (McLean had, of course, learned Piri Piri's story from the Whakatane natives.) Before such a power the influence of the Tino Rangatira began to wane. In addition, his provisions were beginning to run low. His money was all gone, his credit was suffering,

and yet there was no sign of movement from McLean. The Maori have a great gift of humour, which is not infrequently associated with good sense. The Tino Rangatira came to McLean and said, "For God's sake, take the land and go home."

Donald did take the land, and there was a flourishing settlement on it within five years. The Tino Rangatira had all his debts paid, and the remainder of the land was doubled in value by the nearer approach of civilization. This chief proved a great friend of ours in the troublous times, and, as he was a gentleman, a strategist, a Maori, and a man of honour, held McLean in the greatest esteem for ever after. He knew that McLean had outwitted him by his astuteness and business acumen, and as there was no trick in the game, he bore Donald no ill-will.



WAITINI AND WIREMU KINGI





NGA WIREMU TAMIHANA

THE KING MAKER

VIII

HERE is Donald McLean's story about Waitini :—

There was much tribal jealousy between the Ngatiawa and the Ngatimaniopoto, two neighbouring tribes. This was before the natives acquired fire-arms. It was the custom then to fight in phalanx, just as the Greeks did. The two tribes were drawn up in battle array, distant from each other about eight hundred yards. Neither was anxious to begin the fight. They were too equally matched, and embarrassing intermarriages had taken place during a long peace.

Waitini was a Ngatiawa of the purest blood. With great dignity he stepped out of his phalanx, and marched half the distance towards the Ngatimaniopoto. There he halted, sang his song, flourished his tomahawk, slapped his buttock, and strutted defiantly about.

Three young Ngatimaniopoto chiefs rushed out from their phalanx to capture Waitini. As they started abreast, straining every nerve, Waitini sat down to pick a thorn out of his foot. Waitini apparently saw nothing, and, as his adversaries approached, a dreadful yell was sent up to heaven by his tribe, who saw his danger. He moved not a muscle. He was lost. An ominous silence fell upon his people; their hearts were bursting with alarm. The reckless Waitini continued to pick at the thorn; his tomahawk even was laid listlessly by his side. Waitini had calculated

all the chances. It was a brave man's lure. The Ngati maniopoto were of unequal speed. There was, however, but little distance between them. The first was on Waitini apparently before he woke up. He did wake up, however, sprang like a panther half to one side, and then swung round. His youthful adversary could not check his speed, and, as he passed, Waitini buried his hatchet in the Ngati-maniopoto's skull.

The second man was on him almost before he could clear his axe. Waitini ran for his life at a right angle to his adversaries' course. The two Ngatimaniopoto followed him, the foremost making a bee-line, the next at an oblique angle. Waitini fell on his knee when he was all but caught. The first pursuer stumbled over him, and met his death as he fell. Waitini then rushed at the third adversary, whose eye quailed for a moment in doubt. In the moment of indecision he was slain. The two phalanxes then rushed at each other in great fury. Waitini, with coolness, waited for his men. The Ngatimaniopoto were beaten. There was great slaughter, and the Ngatiawa became the dominant tribe, and remained so until the downfall of the King movement.

It is easy to understand the character and position of a man like Waitini amongst such a race. He was worthy of it all—genial, kindly, unassuming, brave; and what a hero he looked! He was six foot four, twenty-one stone weight, without a particle of spare flesh on him. I saw him naked. He had muscles like iron bands, a head like a Roman emperor, and a heart in loyalty and simplicity like a child's.

When the great wave of enthusiasm for national independence swept over Maoridom, Waitini, with a chosen band of 140 men, went down to Taranaki to fight for the cause.

Waitini Taiporutu was a sucking babe in Wiremu Kingi's hands. Wiremu Kingi was a diplomatist. He was amongst the Maori a counsel chief; that is, a politician. Waitini Taiporutu was a war chief, a soldier.

Wi Tamihana te Waharoa was a counsel chief of the Ngatiawa, Waitini's tribe. Tamihana besought Waitini not to go to the Taranaki war. "You are a great warrior," said he. "We cannot spare you. The trouble is coming home to us. I see it. You are a great baby, too—guileless as an innocent girl. You are my sister's son and the pride of your race. Wiremu Kingi is a subtle, white man's Maori, without any special sense of honour. He will entrap you, and you will be lost. You weaken our tribe by taking away the pick of our young men; and when it is all over, the Ngatimaniopoto will turn and rend us. The future of our race is in your hands; stand fast, and wait. In due time, I will find you fighting enough."

In spite of it all, Waitini would go to the war. The fever was in his blood.

THE BATTLE OF MAHOETAHI.

Mahoetahi lay about five or six miles to the north of New Plymouth. It was a knoll with sides sloping irregularly. Somewhat egg-shaped, it was almost surrounded by a flax and raupo swamp. It was easily approachable on the north-east, where a dry ridge led from the open plain right up to the brow of the knoll.

When Waitini arrived at Waitara and joined forces with Wiremu Kingi, he carried things with a high hand. Haperona, a slave by birth, was Wiremu Kingi's fighting chief, a little, fiery man, with a jealous temper and great military talent. On Waitini's arrival, Haperona was relegated to an insignificant position. Wiremu Kingi was a man of imagination, with a practical turn for affairs. He was not carried away by any Utopian idea of Maori nationality. He had lived too long among white men of high intellectual order to deceive himself. He was at Waikanae the personal friend of Archdeacon Hadfield, a distinguished missionary, who had been educated at one of our great English universities. Archdeacon Hadfield united to great enthusiasm for the Church scholarly attainments of

a high character. He was by nature meant for a constitutional lawyer. Divine faith turned him into an apostle. Wiremu Kingi sat at his feet, and became an enthusiast for the British Constitution. Wiremu was forced into war by Governor Gore Brown's pragmatic incapacity.

Kingi had sufficient intellectual power to command a large following in the Parliament of the Colony. Isaac Earle Featherston, William Fox, William Fitzherbert, Archdeacon Hadfield, and Bishop Selwyn were the advocates of his views. Wiremu had used the wave of Maori enthusiasm to further his purpose and secure allies in men and money, but he had no intention of being swallowed up in the King movement. Therefore Waitini Taiporutu's arrival was to him by no means an unmixed blessing. To make war for the defence of his tribal land and constitutional privileges as a British subject, with the whole of Exeter Hall and half the New Zealand Parliament at his back, was one thing; to declare openly for the Maori king another. Wiremu Kingi dissembled. He said to Waitini, "Hitherto we have done nothing. Now indeed, with the chivalry of Waikato, under the command of our greatest soldier, we

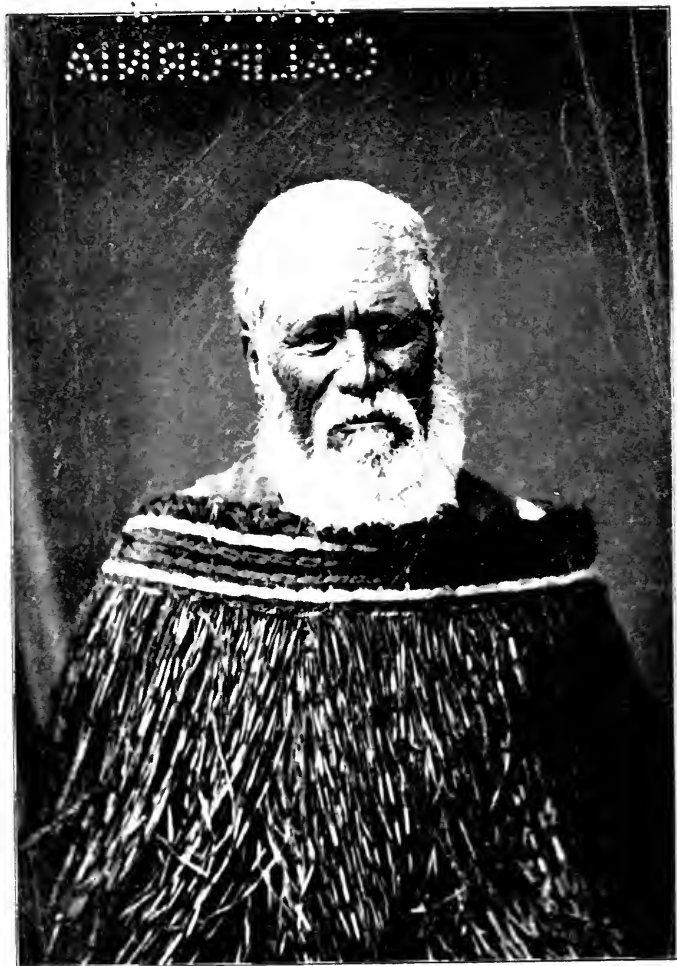
can make a forward movement, and drive the Pakeha into the sea."

Waitini, accompanied by Haperona, and a few of his own tribe, scouted for a day or so. Finally they agreed to establish a post at Mahoetahi, on a part of the land in dispute, and challenge General Pratt to a pitched battle, beat him, and then by a forced march along the sea-shore cut him from his communications with the sea.

For this purpose it was agreed that Waitini, with his Waikato warriors, was to hold Mahoetahi as a blind; the soldiers, who had always acted like fools, were to be drawn on to make an attack on the front and sides of the knoll through the swamp; and that Haperona, with 800 armed men, was to cover, if necessary, Waitini's retreat. On the morning of the battle, Waitini in person made all the dispositions. He planted Haperona, with his 800 men, in some scrub to the north-east of the ridge which led up to Mahoetahi, where these men lay absolutely hidden. He supported them with 400 men under the personal command of Wiremu Kingi. These were hidden in a wooded gulch, half a mile to the rear of Haperona's position. Waitini was to stand singly the assault. When he was surrounded

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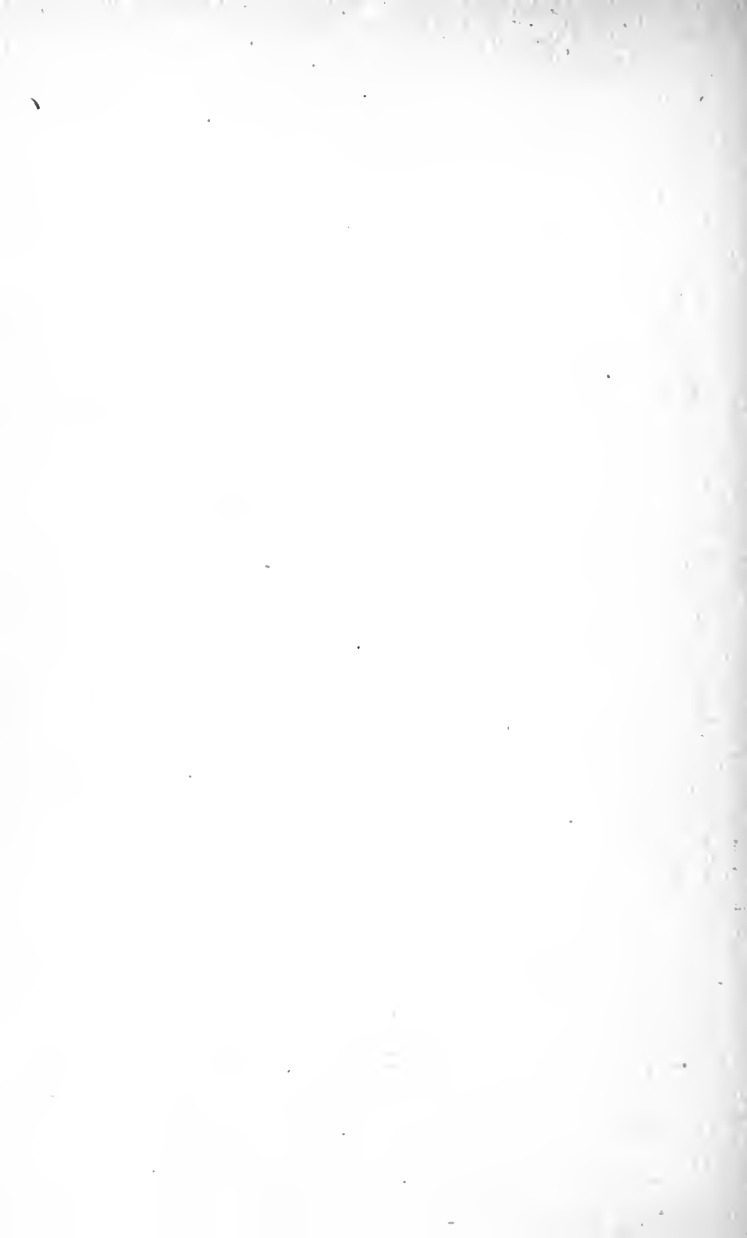
HAFERONA

in the agony of the struggle, Haperona was to extend his men fan-shaped to the right and left, take our forces by surprise in the rear; then, at a given signal, Wiremu Kingi was to move rapidly to his right front by the sea-coast, and cut off General Pratt's retreat to New Plymouth.

I have never been able to satisfy myself as to the cause of the absolute failure of this combined movement. Either Wiremu Kingi's courage failed him at the supreme moment, which is quite possible, as he was only a counsel chief, or Haperona, out of pique, determined to destroy Waitini, or there was an agreement from the beginning between Wiremu Kingi and Haperona to humble the Waikato. From personal acquaintanceship with Haperona, I am inclined to think that he merely obeyed Wiremu Kingi's orders, whatever they were. Haperona had military genius and a profound contempt for the soldier. His position was a perfectly safe one, practically chosen by himself. His chief also was out of danger, his rear being covered with capable scouts in touch with his fighting pas. Whatever the cause, Waitini Taiporutu was not assisted in the hour of danger, and the flower and chivalry of Waikato was left to perish at Mahoetahi.



GENERAL PRATT AT
MAHOETAHI



IX

BEFORE describing the battle, I wish to sketch for you the state of things in New Plymouth. General Pratt had received a distinct challenge to fight the quarrel out signed by Waitini, Wiremu Kingi, and Haperona. One Maori name was as good to him as another. The whole war was in his judgment one vast nightmare. The General was a tall, weakly old man, who suffered habitually from diarrhœa. He sat his horse like a soldier, and was above personal timidity. An austere phlegm was the varnish with which nature concealed a feeble and irresolute will. He was a gentleman anxious to do his duty, but the marrow had long since gone out of his bones. He was surrounded by an active, capable staff who only worried him ; but in the end he did whatever he was told. He consented to accept the challenge, and ordered the necessary preparations. The morning of the 6th November (1860) was cool and a bit dark. The soldiers

paraded in the main street of the town. It looked an imposing force. The Taranaki volunteers were intended to act as supports, and space was left in the column for their companies. When the force was ready to march, as the space retained for Taranaki volunteers was not nearly filled, there was much tittering and ridicule amongst the soldiers. Colonel Carey rode up to Major Atkinson, and said,—

“Major, this is very bad. Where are your men?”

Major Atkinson was a stumpy little Devonshire man, with a long body, short legs, shaggy eyebrows, and an eye betokening a highly intellectual character. His brain was so hot within his head that his coarse, short hair always stood up. He was the gentlest of men and the bravest of soldiers. In battle, or when he was angry, Harry Atkinson's eye wore the cold, fierce glitter of the wild boar. His eye now shone with a fierce light, as he replied in a hoarse trumpet voice that penetrated one's bones,—

“Colonel, let the column advance. My men will fall in as we go, and, in any case, there are enough volunteers present to storm the position.”

This savage answer electrified the listeners.

I watched Colonel Carey's face. He was a *débonnaire* little man, as brave as a bantam cock, shrewd as a court bailiff. He smiled good-naturedly. Every one knew the serious side of Major Atkinson's character. Colonel Carey alone saw the grotesque. The news of the Major's defiant air spread like wildfire through the settlement. His men joined the column in threes and fours as we marched along, and soon the Major's complete companies were in the ranks.

The interview with Major Atkinson was reported to General Pratt, who smiled in grim content. Great was his animosity against the volunteers (though his was a kindly nature) because the *Taranaki Herald* had held him and his soldiers up to unmeasured contempt. He felt that at last each was to occupy its proper relative position in the public view, and that this parade had drawn the sting of volunteer ridicule.

Arrived at Mahoetahi, the General saw nothing but an insignificant hill surrounded with an apparently dry swamp. There was not a Maori to be seen, nor an earthwork or stockade. The only sign of life was a thin wreath of smoke ascending peaceably in the morning air.

The General chewed his grey moustache, eased himself by sitting sideways in the saddle, and said,—

“Well, Carey, sold again?”

Just as they were in doubt, Major Atkinson fell out of the ranks, and, hot with seething emotions, walked up to the General, and said,—

“General, my men were slow in parading. This is our land. I claim for the Taranaki volunteers the honour of the assault.”

The General looked at Colonel Carey, who said,—

“Major, the dispositions for the attack are not yet completed. In any case you and your men are entitled to an honourable position in the field. You shall hear from the General later.”

It was then decided that the assault should be entrusted to a company of the 65th Foot, and a company of the Taranaki volunteers under the command of Major Atkinson. A wiser decision could not have been arrived at. Both of these forces knew the country well.

Instructions were given for the various companies to deploy to the right and the left, so as to surround Mahoetahi. Major Nelson at Waitara had been warned by marching early

to take it in the rear. The guns unlimbered were brought into position, and commenced firing. The 65th and Taranaki volunteers, skirmishing around, soon found practical access at the rear. With great fury they hurled themselves at the elevated ridge, where they were met by Waitini in person leading his men.

Here a hand-to-hand conflict between the tomahawk and the bayonet took place in the open. Both the natives and the white men were too eager to reload once the first volley was fired. Waitini was both outnumbered and overmatched in weapons. His men went down in numbers, Waitini amongst the very first.

When the ridge was carried, the remainder of Waitini's men took to the swamp, and in many instances were hunted like rats in a water-hole. Many of them got away into the high fern, before our soldiers woke up to the realization of the victory.

Haperona at Waitini's rear merely fired a volley in the air and decamped. The bitter story of Waitini's death was told with weeping all over the Waikato, and the Waikatos swore eternal vengeance for a near day.

The confusion amongst our men was great. There were so few Maori to kill, and so many anxious to kill them. This incident caught

my eye. A noble-looking Maori, naked and tattooed, stood up to his waist in swamp-water. He was quite near, and flourished his tomahawk bravely. The Enfield rifle was a beast of a weapon at a short range. The trajectory was too high. In the haste and turmoil many of our men fired at him, but missed. A hot-headed Irishman, impatient of the delay, took a running jump, and with fixed bayonet made a rush at him. The Maori, as he saw his adversary in the air, lightly stooped, and let his tomahawk swing to his wrist by its thong. The bayonet passed over his head, and he caught the soldier by the hips and waist, and gently placed him under his foot in the water. There was a furious shout from the bank, "He is drowning Mick Ryan."

Two or three men lay on their stomachs, and fired point-blank. As the gallant Maori toppled over, Mick came to the surface spluttering, and bawled out, "Bedad, I thought he had smothered me entirely, entirely."

As soon as the battle was over, we gathered together the Maori dead. Wounded Maori there were none. None of the dead were mutilated. To the number of fifty the Waikatos got off through the swamp and fern. The gallant dead were carted into New Plymouth

on our gun-carriages. There they were all laid out like pheasants after a battue. Descriptions of their tattoos, with full details of their height and figure, were taken down, and published in the Maori language. There was to be no mistake about the announcement of the victory.

And a victory it was, though it brought us much trouble, and finally led to the Waikato war. The escaped Ngatiaua (Waikatos), after the manner of their race, graphically told the whole story on their return home. These are the only particulars I have to add.

When Waitini's scouts ran in and said, "The soldiers are approaching," Waitini, with Maori stolidity, replied, "Waitini is at his breakfast. When informed that the soldiers had arrived, he said, "Waitini is at his breakfast." When assured the whole position was surrounded, he rose, and quietly said, "Waitini has finished his breakfast." Then at the head of his men he rushed to meet the storming party, which had already touched the crown of the hill.

One word in extenuation of Wiremu Kingi's desertion of his noble ally.

It is undoubtedly true that Major Nelson's march from Waitara took Wiremu Kingi by surprise, because it threatened his rear. It had never been calculated by Waitini, when he

made his dispositions, that so important a concentration could be effected.

It is difficult to acquit Wiremu Kingi, however, of a full knowledge of our resources, and certain it is in my opinion that Wiremu Kingi would never have deserted his own people as he did the Waikatos. When the details of the catastrophe were sifted at Ngaruawahia by the King's Council, it was resolved, in the interests of the Maori national movement, to hush up the facts ; but the sting remained, and had it not been for the necessity of combining against the common (English) foe the treachery would have been wiped out in blood.

A MILITARY HOSPITAL

X

SHORTLY after the affair of Mahoetahi I was moved up to Waitara, and placed in charge of the field hospital there. My intimacy with the officers of the flying column, under Major Hutchins, was thus broken off. I found myself a stranger; and, as I had no regimental ties, I lived a good deal alone, and mounded about amongst our outposts, making a study of the British soldier. I found him to be very much as circumstances made him. The 65th man was a breezy, brawny giant, who moved about in loose clothes, open, chatty, and good-natured. He got blazing drunk whenever the opportunity offered, took his punishment next day as if it were a cup of coffee, was a perfectly wholesome child of nature, who laughed and shook hands with every one he met. He was perfectly respectful to his officer, saluted him reverently with a twinkle in his eye, as though he would say, "How goes it, Charley?"

The 40th man was a perfect beauty. The best set up soldier I had ever seen, clean and smart, he was secretly bitterly discontented. He had come from Melbourne, where he had been the pride of the parks and the joy of Collins Street. He was a citizen in his tastes, hated the mud and rain of this d——d country, and daily longed for his discharge, so that he might return to Melbourne.

The 12th man was less showy than the 40th soldier and more contented. He was a bit languid, and enjoyed the fresh air after the enervating heat of Sydney. The sailors were all alike, except that the detachment from the Royal *Colonial* steam sloop-of-war *Victoria*, which received a high colonial wage and was never flogged, seemed to think little of itself, and was good-naturedly tolerated by the Royal Jack-tar, whose pay was very small, and discipline of a bitterly rigid character. When a Jack was triced up to the triangle and received four dozen, the colonial sailors seemed to hang their heads, and the Jack-tars swelled with natural pride. "That's how we do it in the Royal Navy." "Poor miserable beggars! There is not an officer amongst you dare flog a man, nor a sailor that is worth it."

The chief military duty at that time con-

sisted of outpost work. I noticed that the men of the 40th and 12th regiments came in jaded and weary, whilst the soldiers of the 65th Foot always turned up in the morning fresh and rosy. I was much struck with this difference, which was more marked in rough, wet weather. The temperaments of the men accounted for part of it; but the difference was so glaring I determined to inquire into the cause.

I asked a 65th man for an explanation. He said, "We are on duty to-night. The weather is wet and cold. Come round to our outposts after 'grand rounds' and see for yourself."

I did so. The outposts had been inspected, all orders were given for the night. The officer on duty had retired within the lines. I crept up and was recognised by the men. A soldier near me on sentry called out in a loud drawling voice, "Tena koe?" (Maori for "How are you?"). Immediately long spun out, "Tena koutou?" ("How are you all?") was heard.

The soldier replied, "Tena koutou oeto" ("God save you all").

The Maori replied, "Kapai te Hickety Pifth" (65th). "Good, it is the sixty-fifth regiment."

The soldier answered, "Kapai te Maori" ("Good, it is the Maori").

The Maori said, "Too wet and cold to-night. Let us all go to sleep."

The soldier replied, "All right." Certain it is there was no firing. Each relied on the other's honour. Had there been any change of policy, the Maori would assuredly have given full notice.

PEACH-GROVES AND THISTLES



XI

ON receipt of information that the Maori had deserted their pa, and were digging potatoes and collecting peaches in a small but beautiful valley, we determined to surprise them. In order to do so, we started off two hours before the break of day, about 1,000 of us, with as much clatter and noise as if we were going to market. Having marched for miles through tangled fern, we arrived at a slope of ground fringed with forest. A halt was called, and our guide and interpreter was sent for. Colonel Carey questioned the interpreter in my hearing. "Yes, there are the peach-groves," he said. "But you told me there was an open plain." "So there was. Owing to neglect of the land since this war broke out, this forest of thistles has grown up."

Colonel Carey looked incredulous—the General weary and disgusted. Skirmishers were thrown out, and ordered to enter this cover. I rode a pony about fourteen hands

three high. It was my duty to accompany the skirmishers, and I did not dismount. It was with difficulty I forced my horse through the thistles, such was the closeness and strength of the growth. The horse's skin was not pricked, because he had to do merely with the stem. I got all the benefit of the thorns. As I rode, the thistles were up to my shoulders. They were ordinary Scotch thistles, accidentally imported in grass-seed, flourishing in a virgin soil. Who after this can wonder at the success of Scotchmen in a new country? I am aware there are persons who, on perusal, will consider this account of the growth of thistles exaggerated. I have nothing to do with such. It is my mission to tell the truth as I saw it.

When the little battle was over—the Maori were there—we had to tell off a large fatigue party with bill-hooks to cut a road through the thistles. The crop was as thick as wheat, yielding forty bushels to the acre, and the uncut sides offered a solid barrier to any entrance except by force.

The Rev. Mr. Wilson, a charming Church of England missionary, accompanied us on the expedition. He was a simple-minded, sincere, delightful companion. He had been a chaplain

PEACH-GROVES AND THISTLES.

in H.M. Navy, and left the service to Christianize the Maori. We became great friends. As it was reported we had killed and wounded many of the Maori who were too proud to desert their peach-groves without a fight, Mr. Wilson decided to pay them a visit of condolence. I volunteered to accompany him, to look after the wounded. He said he would first go alone, and then, if the Maori consented, return for me. He did return. His reception had been friendly ; but they denied having any wounded, and added, if there were, their own doctor was sufficient for their purposes. Mr. Wilson was rather sad, foreseeing that the war would end badly. We cut down all the peach trees, dug up the potatoes, devastated the country (as far as its nature would permit), and returned to our camp at Waitara.

1

MAORI SURPRISE ATTACKS



XII

ON the 28th December another expedition was organized. We marched in great silence at two o'clock in the morning, and arrived at Mate-Riko-Riko at dawn.

It was a lovely morning. The languid summer air, moistened by evaporating dew, soothed our weary limbs as we lay stretched on the ground. I was on duty with the advanced guard. I was a complete stranger both to officers and men, and had not even selected an orderly. With a few surgical appliances in my haversack and some ship biscuits in the pocket of my blue jumper, I rested apart under the shelter of a clump of fern. The men had stacked their arms, and were lying about smoking. Their officers (I think) had returned to their regimental headquarters for a hurried breakfast. I listened to the conversation of the soldiers.

They were discussing the folly and absurdity of the whole war, declaiming against the in-

justice which bound them to a service for a shilling a day, subject to stoppages, whilst a useless volunteer received half a crown a day and full liberty to disobey orders if he liked. Public opinion in the advance guard verged on sedition, when suddenly, like a transformation scene in a pantomime, the Maori were amongst us. I was stricken with terror and dazed with admiration. The Maori, with their tongues out, eyes starting out of their heads, jumping from side to side like panthers, flourishing their tomahawks, shaking the feathers of their taia in our very noses, presented a dreadful spectacle. Our men rose in a panic, rushed to their stacked arms, which were unloaded, and clean bolted. A few men were wounded at my feet. One in particular, shot in the thigh and bleeding profusely, looked in my face with the eye the sheep casts on the butcher as the knife is descending. Great God! what was I to do? If I remained, I would be tomahawked. Desert the wounded man I could not. Suddenly I had an inspiration.

I jumped up from the side of the stricken soldier, fired one barrel of my revolver at the nearest Maori, and yelled out, "Tipperary to the rescue!"

The running soldiers turned like a flock of starlings.

"Give them the point of the bayonet, boys!" I shouted.

The revulsion was immediate. One great yell, "Tipperary!" went up to heaven. The Maori disappeared like a bad dream, and I made off with my wounded.

It is true, so great for the moment was the panic, I had to stop some of the retreating men with my pistol, and force them to carry off the wounded. For this little service I was introduced by a singularly gallant man, our Chief Medical Officer, to the General for notice in despatches. I was all dishevelled, my hands and clothes stained in blood. The General said: "He is too young to mention in despatches. At the least, he might have washed his hands."

I was not such a fool as to expect to be mentioned in despatches. The fact was, I had rallied the men to save myself and the wounded; and as soon as I could, I got out of danger. There was no particular bravery in my conduct. You cannot praise a non-combatant officer for rallying soldiers without degrading combatant officers. In this case there was no combatant officer present. Was

the General likely to confess such a breach of discipline? I held my tongue scrupulously, and the whole incident was passed over as though it had never happened. All the same, the Chief Medical Officer came to me a few days later, and said :—

“You shall accompany the next assaulting party. It is going to be a serious affair, and, if you come out of it all right, ‘you shall be mentioned in despatches.’ The General has promised it.”

I experienced a cold chill down my spinal column. I thought, “Damn your despatches!”

I said, “Understand, I will do anything I am ordered ; but, in my opinion, no glory is worth a bullet wound.”

He, who was covered with medals, and wore the Victoria Cross, looked at me with scarcely smothered contempt. He was never as friendly afterwards.

The General changed his mind about the assault. Perhaps, if it had come off, I would not have been detailed for that duty. The surprise at Mate-Riko-Riko, with other considerations, changed the whole conduct of the Taranaki war. The General made up his mind to approach Wiremu Kingi’s fighting pa,

Puke-Rangiore, by sap. The occupation of Mate-Riko-Riko left its front open to us. We made clear our base of operations by making a roadway one chain wide all the way to Waitara. The lesson afforded by the evacuated Tataramika pa, previously described, lived in the General's mind. He decided no fighting pa was practicable for a storming party. An earthwork with flanking angles was thrown up. Our ammunition and provisions were placed in this under a strong guard. All the fern and scrub near us was cleared away. Double pickets were placed in various directions. Double sentries patrolled all night.

We then advanced about 400 yards by sap, rolling before us a huge gabion (wicker roller). Then we erected another redoubt—an earthwork with flanking angles. In this we encamped about 150 men. Double sentry duty was enforced inside each of these works all night.

We then pushed on our sap about 400 yards. All this advancing was, of course, daily and hourly resisted by the Maori.

Here we erected a large earthwork, without flanking angles, to accommodate 300 men. It was called No. 3 redoubt. The precautions at this point were redoubled, because the ridge on

which we were advancing fell away here to the left, and was lost in a gentle slope about fifteen yards distant from our fortification. There had been some discussion about the wisdom of construction without flanking angles, but, as the force was so large and time an element of importance, it was determined to hurry on. It was considered quite safe, as our men occupied at this time the head of the sap each night.

From this point the sap proceeded more slowly, as every inch of the ground was disputed by the Maori. We erected in time No. 4 redoubt, to contain 150 men; and Nos. 5 and 6 redoubts, with flanking angles, containing together about 600 men.

We were now about 250 yards from the Puke-Rangiore pa, well within range of the Maori rifle-pits, yet our precautions were such that we scarcely ever had a man wounded.

Our safe and near approach aggravated the Maori beyond endurance. Having received reinforcements from Waikato, in the shape of a body of men who came to seek *utu* (revenge) for Waitini Taiporutu's death, the Maori determined to assume the offensive.

Our six redoubts were in exact line. All of them were of the same width. Thus every flanking angle within rifle range commanded

the approach to its neighbour's side. Therefore No. 3 redoubt, though unprovided with flanking angles, had its approach on the sides protected by Nos. 2 and 4 redoubts. Each redoubt projected its earthen wall about five feet above the level of the ground, and was surrounded by a ditch about four feet deep and proportionately wide.

The Maori picked a storming party of 130 men. They crept along one very dark night till they came to No. 3 redoubt, where the land sloped off to the left of our earthwork. Here each Maori singly crept on his belly till he got into the ditch, where in time the whole storming party lay breathlessly still.

Lieutenant Jackson of the 40th was the officer on duty for the night. The sentry reported that there was some scratching noise going on in the ditch. Lieutenant Jackson got on the top of the earthen wall and peered over. He said to the sentry,—

“There is nothing. It is all quiet. It is as dark as pitch.”

The sentry replied, “I did hear something, sir.”

Jackson said, “Hold me hard by the legs ; I will reach down and see. I do not want to alarm the camp.”

As Jackson leant further over, an impatient Maori shot him through the head.

The sentry roared out, "Man the defences!"

Immediately the Maori in the ditch swarmed over. They had cut steps in the earthen wall with their axes. Our men all slept in their clothes, with their arms stacked hard by. The Maori were met by the bayonet. One Maori, as he was mounting the ditch, was run through the body. He seized the soldier's rifle in both hands. The soldier never thought of letting go, and, as the Maori and soldier were thus fixed, the Maori crept over their wounded comrade's back.

In the meantime the assaulting party's allies commenced a furious attack on the front, sides, and rear of No. 6 redoubt. It was all futile. The men from Nos. 1, 4, and 5 redoubts hurried up at the double, and took the Maori on each flank. The affair was over in a few moments, and, as usual, the Maori left very few wounded or killed on the field. Of course, the darkness of the night favoured the escape.

Indeed, in any case, live shells constantly thrown into the ditch made the Maori position at No. 3 untenable, and, as surprise was the essence of the scheme, the storming party at once gave up the enterprise. By this time all

the friendship between the races was over. We were in the death-grips with each other. The Maori knew our military customs perfectly. We had never once been caught asleep, yet they backed their gallantry against all our precautions, and expected to cut our whole force in two in the middle of the night. Not often was a braver military achievement attempted.

Were I to try and describe to you the agonizing shame the Maori experienced at this defeat, I should suffer too much. Suffice it to say, the wounded and dying could not lift up their heads. They kept on declaring they were cowards, slaves, and the sons of slaves. The glory of their race was gone. Defeat, disgraceful, overwhelming defeat. They wanted no water nor care for their wounds. They wished only for annihilation, and that their people should not live to hear of their feebleness in war.

Fine men, the odds were nothing to them. Were they not the descendants of the greatest warriors that ever trod the earth? And these soldiers. Alas! alas! Had they not been skulking behind earthworks for nearly a year? Oh, shame! shame! This defeat hardened into steel the whole Maori race. They deter-

mined to die hard. But die they now knew they must. Our attack, of course, proceeded in the ordinary way. The big roller crept on nearer and nearer the pa. Our men no longer slept in the sap. Large patrols took their place. The Maori at night tried to destroy our works. The patrols fought them with varying fortunes, and drove them off.

About this time Colonel Warre arrived from India. The General took him out and showed him the Maori position.

“What would you advise, Colonel?”

“Well, you see, I am accustomed to these niggers. You perceive that little eminence to the right rear? Well, I would seize that, pour in a flanking fire from that position, making a detour to the left with a few companies of men, and then storm the pa along that ridge on the right front.”

The General gazed at him, and turned nearly green.

“It is an excellent proposal, Colonel. You shall see for yourself.”

The General ordered 400 as handsome soldiers as the eye ever rested upon to deploy to the right and seize that little hill. The men advanced gallantly, and then wavered: the Maori, silent and deadly, were all lying ready

in their rifle-pits, each man armed with a double-barrelled smooth-bore. They would have reserved their fire till our men were within forty yards, then delivered a volley at the soldiers' legs, and, skipping out of their rifle-pits, would have disappeared in the forest, leaving a host of our men dead on the field.

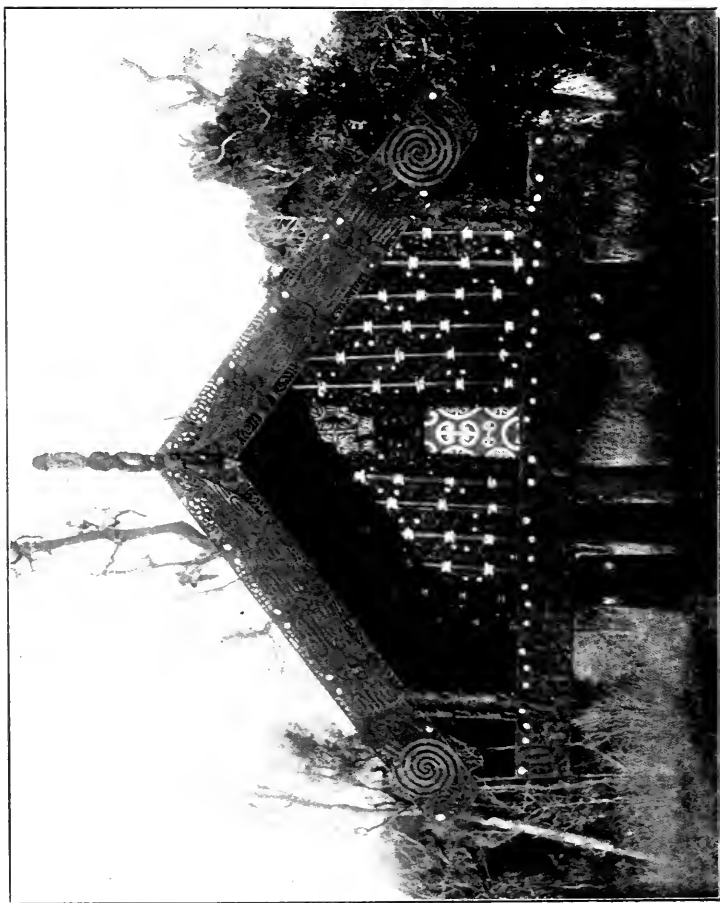
"What do you say now, Colonel?"

The bugles sounded the recall, and we all went back to our fortifications. The soldiers knew the Maori far better than Colonel Warre did, and their *morale* had been damaged by melancholy experience.

Had the General insisted, the men would have carried the position, but at what a loss! Colonel Warre's presence and contemptuous manner were not acceptable to General Pratt. He was sent to take command of the Auckland district.

GENERAL CAMERON

[illegible]



A MAORI STOREHOUSE

XIII

JUST at this point, when we were on the eve of rendering Wiremu Kingi's position at Puke-Rangiore untenable, an armistice was sought by Wiremu Tamihana, the King-maker. The Maori had always got the better of us in diplomacy, and there is little doubt we were outwitted on this occasion. The capture of an empty pa meant little to us, and that is all the glory we could have achieved; but the moral effect on the King Movement might have been immense. Nevertheless, our political dissensions were so galling that the armistice was granted. The fact was, most of our South Island Parliamentary representatives, who had suffered nothing, insisted that the war should be prosecuted to the bitter end. In this they were supported by the members from Taranaki, because their homes were devastated and their future gone. The rest of the North Island representatives, supported largely by the Province of Nelson, insisted on peace.

An armistice was the only possible compromise, and it was substantially agreed upon as between independent nations.

General Cameron arrived about this time, and the War Office poured in troops from both India and England. The Maori foresaw the consequences, and, notwithstanding the arrival of Sir George Grey as Governor—or rather, in consequence of it—both strained every effort to make ready for the final struggle.

General Cameron was in the prime of life. He enjoyed high reputation, was an iron-grey man, a rigid disciplinarian, reticent and austere. His arrival was a surprise dramatically effected. Arriving by steamer, he rode out to Waitara from New Plymouth without giving any notice, handed his authority to General Pratt, and at once took command. I was in medical charge of the field hospital at Waitara. Dressed in a blue jumper, with a pair of brown tweed trousers on tucked into digger's knee-boots, I wore a forage cap with the Army Medical Staff badge. As I was seeing my patients in a large marquee tent, in stalked this military figure. I saluted, and went on dressing the men's wounds.

General Cameron stared at me and said,—

"Are you a medical officer?"

I said, "Yes, General."

He replied, "I could not have thought it."

"Nevertheless, General, it is a fact."

Soon an order was issued for the removal of the headquarters of the 65th Regiment to Auckland. I accompanied it. One day I was walking down Queen Street; it came on to rain, and I found myself sheltering under a verandah with a gentleman in plain clothes, whom I knew to be the General. I respected his incognito, and engaged in a general conversation with him. He knew perfectly well who I was. I avoided military subjects, and discussed the social condition of the Colony.

He was clearly impressed. Every kind of knowledge was important to him in his difficult position. The shower lifted, and we parted, exchanging the usual courtesies.

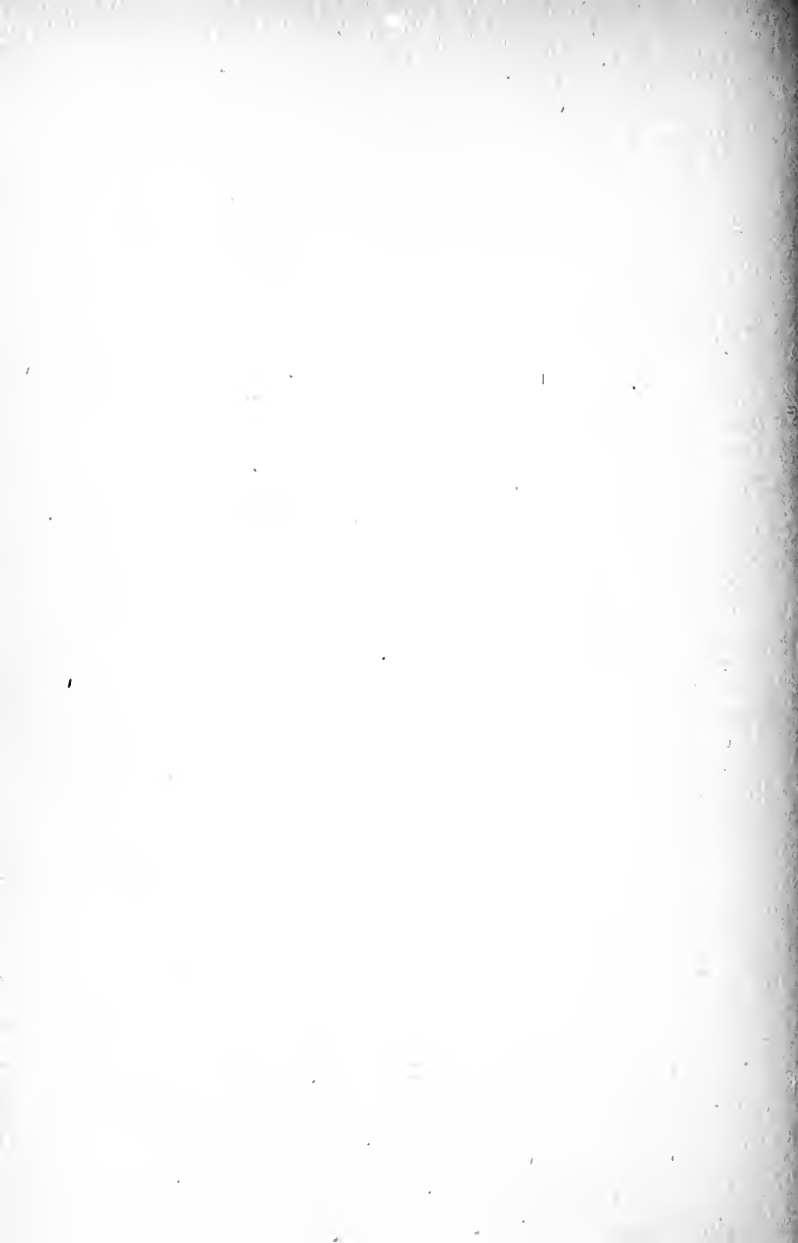
The General required just then a report on the housing and sanitary condition of the women and children of some Indian regiments who had just arrived. I was selected for the duty, and sent in a straightforward, business-like report, urging various concessions outside the prescribed line. This led to my being put in medical charge of a flying column sent to an entirely different part of the Colony, where

the war had not as yet broken out. Thus I missed seeing all the important military operations in the Waikato.

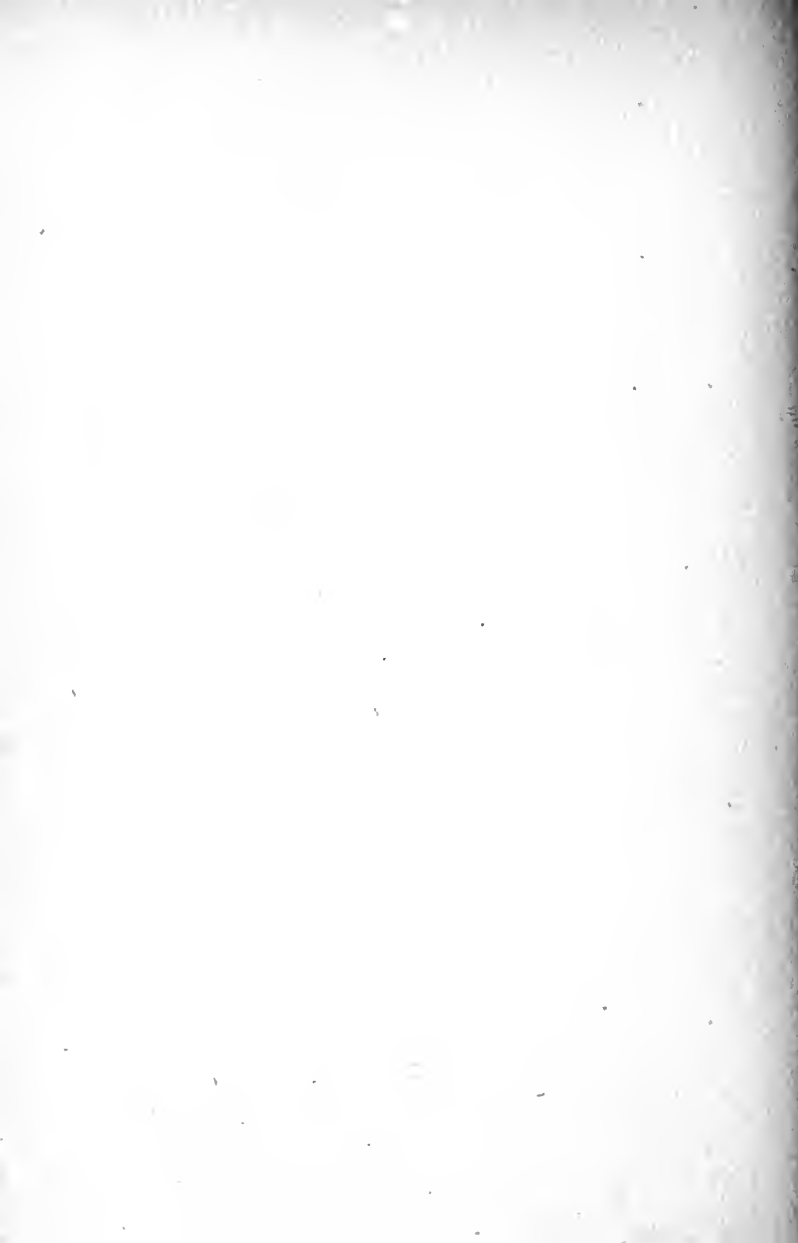
When, however, General Cameron moved his headquarters to Wanganui, on the west coast, I received orders to join that expeditionary force. It were bootless to describe the condition of things I found there, or the hardships I underwent. Suffice it to say that the persecutions of the soldier under the cumbersome system in vogue surpassed anything I had previous experience of. General Cameron had loudly declared that New Zealand was the grave of glory—he succeeded in making it an abode of misery for the soldier. Such marching, counter-marching, picketing, such a work of double sentries, such an ado to prevent surprises, would have taken the heart out of any man. The great military strategy was to march all night through slush and rain, in darkness and confusion, and encamp at break of day on some miserable flat reeking with swamp water. How well do I remember an ass of a Colonel commanding a wing of the 68th Foot bawling out constantly, as we floundered through the tangled roots and mud in the darkness of the winter's night, "Keep your fours, men!" and the reply in a strident

voice, "Ah, then, is it all fours you mean, Colonel?"

I have said enough. I went through months of it, and had it not been for a sense of humour strong in me, I sometimes think I would have died under the hardship.



FROM CAMERON TO CHUTE



XIV

NOTWITHSTANDING all our precautions, a handful of gallant Maori worked through our pickets at Nukumarū, and surprised a body of men in the very heart of our encampment. Lieutenant Gudgeon, in his *New Zealand War*, says a Maori was shot just outside the General's tent. If so, that incident was kept secret. I was encamped there at the time with the 68th Foot, and beyond the fact that there had been a surprise, I heard nothing. After this incident our precautions seemed to be redoubled. Dull care sat enthroned over the whole force. The soldiers, though physically powerful and in excellent health, were spiritless. There was nothing but drudgery ; no fighting to stir the pulses of the men. We marched past the Wereroa pa, leaving it on our right. It was said to be impregnable. Finally we encamped at the mouth of the Patea River. Here we made asses of ourselves

—marching about through high fern up to our shoulders, and never moving except in overwhelming numbers.

One fine day, with the sun shining gladly overhead, we set out, a great force of us, horse, foot, and artillery. Forming a half-moon, with the cavalry skirmishing on the right and left flanks, we advanced over an open plain to Kakaramaea.

The village of Kakaramaea was situated on a gentle hill sloping to the plain. A flax and toi-toi swamp lay at the foot of Kakaramaea, and extended in depth about a mile to our front as we advanced. The Maori, about 120 men, women, and boys, came out to meet us under the protection of this cover. We swooped down upon them. Their prospect was hopeless; we had them completely in our power. This made no difference to the Maori. He fought in the open, delivering his fire, retired slowly loading in a dignified manner. The women fought beside the men, the boys in front of all. The dignity and martial bearing of the Maori touched the hearts of our soldiers. Very few of the Maori were killed, and the wounded were handled with infinite tenderness by our men. The majority of the defenders of Kakaramaea got away scatheless,

and every one on our side was equally delighted. The British soldier's heart was not in the struggle.

I heard our men say, "Begorra, it's a murder to shoot them. Sure they are our own people, with their potatoes, and fish, and children. Who knows but that they are Irishmen, with faces a little darkened by the sun, who escaped during the persecutions of Cromwell?"

The wounded Maori and white men were all collected together in the runanga-house at the top of the hill in the village. They were treated in turn by the surgeons of the force, according to the gravity of their injuries, irrespective of rank or colour. When the wounded were all seen to, General Cameron, a man of the most humane disposition, visited the runanga-house, making affectionate inquiries and giving expression to soothing words. I happened to be present. When the General's interpreter came opposite one Maori, I said, "General, that is a most extraordinary man. He has received two gunshot wounds; his thigh has already been amputated, and his arm is in danger; he has had the bayonet thrust into his body seven times, and received four sabre wounds in the head. Look at him

now, smoking his pipe as tranquilly as a baby sucking a bottle."

The interpreter interpreted all I had said to the Maori. He nodded his head, and smiled in a sweet and gentle manner.

The General's eyes moistened, and he became a little pale.

"In the name of God," he exclaimed, "why did you resist our advance? Could you not see we were in overwhelming force?"

The Maori replied, "What would you have us do? This is our village, these are our plantations. Men are not fit to live if not brave enough to defend their own homes."

The General looked abashed. "At any rate," he said, "I am glad to see you are now well treated. Have you any complaints to make?"

"No. . . . By the way, yes. Whilst I was lying wounded on the ground, and after a soldier had given me a drink, an officer came up and sabred me."

"That is not according to the usages of war."

"That is a slave's work."

The General turned purple and swore an oath. "I'll cashier him. Would you know the man?"

"Yes. I was a little flurried, but I would know the man."

There was a great turmoil in the camp ; hot and fevered inquiries. Presently a colour-sergeant marched in, holding a drummer-boy by the ear. The boy was marched up opposite the Maori, who continued to smoke and gaze at him intently.

"Is that the officer?"

"Yes," said the Maori ; "that is he."

The interpreter explained that the youth was a drummer-boy, and his sword was only a toy.

"Do not say any more about it," quoth the Maori. "Boys must be boys. We train our own sons the same way." It seems to be the only fashion we have in common.

This Maori recovered, and was set free. He went to war against us afresh on his return to his people. He was taken prisoner in a surprise effected by Colonel McDonnell, and when I saw him he smiled on me, and we exchanged confidences.

"What !" I said, "in arms again ?"

"Yes," he said. "What would you have a man do ? He must stand by his own people."

Our whole force after this became listless. An idea prevailed that it was an unjust war, in every way discreditable to us. The soldier no

longer desired to kill the Maori, and disliked more than ever being killed by him. In spite of a most harassing discipline, it became in some instances a task to muster the men for picket duty. It is a fact that I often heard commented on, that in one regiment it took the non-commissioned officers twenty to thirty minutes to muster a complement of fifty men for outpost duty. The heart had gone out of the enterprise, when unexpectedly General Cameron gave up the command, and General Chute succeeded him.

General Chute was considered one of the best drills in Her Majesty's service. The soldiers christened him the "Kerry Bull," not merely from his resonant voice, which on parade echoed from hill to hill, but on account of his general appearance and roaming disposition. He was a short-legged man, with a shaggy, square, masculine head and powerful body. He walked deliberately, carrying his head a little to either side, and no man could precisely foretell his temper from day to day. He was equally loved and feared by his own regiment, but as he was not a scientific soldier, and naturally of a retiring disposition, he was little known to the army generally.

Owing to the weight of his body and short

grip of his legs, he was a poor equestrian. Consequently he rode a quiet old horse, whose hair was left as long as possible, because the General was equally short-tempered and good-natured. When anything went wrong on parade, the General swore awfully, and hammered his old horse with a short hunting-crop,—treatment which made the animal play curious tricks. The whole spectacle was something to marvel at, but no one who looked at the General's face could have the hardihood to laugh and expect to survive.

When he took command, I saw at once he was a character, and soon became convinced he was as lonely as a moulting crow in the midst of his predecessor's brilliant staff. I therefore watched him closely. I was sufficiently known and sufficiently insignificant to be able to do this without attracting attention. The General, however, by a curious intuitive power some men possess, saw under my grave, respectful demeanour a certain humorous sympathy with his difficult position. He always had the habit of walking about amongst the men. Alone, and wearing a shabby undress uniform, whacking his riding-boot with his hunting-crop, he would turn up anywhere in the camp.

The men liked their rough, capable com-

mander. In a few days they sang and whistled and joked each other with all the zest of a newly recovered gaiety, marching light-heartedly with a swing in their gait.

I had previously resigned my commission, with a view to settling in the Colony. On providing a substitute I was allowed to retire on leave, so I saw no more of General Chute's expedition. A field officer, however, of Crimean experience, continued the observations I had always made, and this is the narrative he told me about five months afterwards :—

“Soon after your departure we had a brush with the enemy. The soldiers went into it with heart, so we were successful everywhere. The General walked about the camp, chatting with the men. ‘Jolly fine sport we have had this morning, boys ; plenty of pigs and potatoes and poultry after it.’ We had captured an open village, and were rejoicing over the enemy's supplies. ‘A good feed to-night—a short, tight sleep—an early march in the morning—another fight about the break of day. Donnybrook will be nothing to it.’

“The men merely smiled, and rejoiced openly when his back was turned. It was decided to march round Mount Egmont. Dr.

Featherston, Superintendent of the Province of Wellington, arrived with 300 friendly natives. The General profoundly distrusted friendly natives.

"Isaac Earle Featherston was a stern, strong, haughty man, with a genial nature when not irritated. Proud and self-reliant, he resented dictation of any kind. General Chute and he jarred whenever they met. The General ordered the natives to parade before the break of day, make a detour through the forest, and take a pa he was about to attack in the rear.

"Dr. Featherston said the Maori were weary and footsore from constant marching; that to be hurried in this way was contrary to their tribal custom; that they were most useful allies, but must be humoured a bit.

"General Chute lost his temper; said, 'Damn you and your allies! If they do not march when I order them, I will fire into them. I will have no mutiny in my camp, supported by the civil authority.'

"Chute marched off, and left Featherston in a rage. Featherston sat down and smoked cheroot after cheroot, saying nothing. This was a bad sign. Featherston silent was a dangerous man.

"Now, there was an officer in camp, Deputy-Commissary-General Strickland. The success of this expedition was everything to him. It meant promotion and a C.B. Strickland was a man of great Eastern experience. He saw what was going on, and said, 'This will never do.' He called on Featherston, who sat smoking in his tent, asked for something to drink, and lit his pipe. Featherston knew him, and liked Strickland's rugged humour.

"Strickland at length said, 'The General has sent me to ask you to supper.'

"Featherston exploded.

"'It is like General Chute's damned insolence! As soon as the war is over, I will call him out and shoot him. I wish to the Almighty every soldier in the Colony was out of it. Were it not for my duty to New Zealand, I would fall upon General Chute's force this night with my Maori and slaughter the whole of his men.'

"Strickland smoked on, and made no reply until Featherston's volcanic eruption was over. Then he said,—

"'The General recognises the full force of what you have said. He will give you ample satisfaction when the time comes. All the same, there is no use in two men like you

quarrelling now. The General knows that he cannot get on without you. His temper is the curse of his life, but he is a very good fellow, and you will like him well when you know him as I do. May I tell him you will come to supper?’

“Featherston mused a bit, and said,—

“‘I will think of it.’

“Strickland then went to General Chute and said,—

“‘I have just been with Featherston. He desires me to say he is coming to supper with you.’

“‘The devil he is!’

“‘Yes, General; and, look here, you may as well ask me too.’

“Chute did ask Strickland. Strickland at the proper moment went over, and said,—

“‘Featherston, the General is waiting supper for you.’

“They all three supped together, rose from table immense friends, and the friendship was permanent.”

I will now narrate precisely, and almost word for word, the exact story I heard of the attack on Otapawa from a field-officer of distinction who served there. This account was verified in every detail by a private of the

14th Foot, who was present and took part in the attack.

When the 57th Foot were ordered to assault Otapawa, which was a fortified, rifle-pitted pa, they rushed forward with great gallantry, supported by the 14th Foot. The slope which led to the pa had been scarped, and when the men were within 150 yards of the stockade, they met such a deadly volley that they wavered.

General Chute rode up, whacking his old horse with his riding-crop; swore and blasphemed in an awful manner. At last he became silent for a moment; then he stood up in his stirrups, and said,—

“You do not know me, men. I am Billy Chute. Do you think you are going to make a laughing-stock of me at every club in Pall Mall? I swear by the living God I will leave the bones of the whole army to bleach on the sides of these mountains before I will ever turn my back on any fortification I once assault. Fifty-seventh, I will do worse than that: I will disgrace you before the whole army. Fourteenth, charge!”

The 14th had a vile reputation for discipline; but this regiment knew the “Kerry Bull.” They uttered one fearful yell, and

sought to break past the 57th. The 57th rushed headlong at the pa, and these two regiments almost bayoneted each other in their eagerness to get in first. The Maori broke in terror at the fury of the assault, and never again faced the bayonet.

The 14th Foot and the 57th were not encamped near each other for some time after this, and the officers and men of both regiments, knowing the gravity of the position, kept perfectly silent, never even discussing amongst themselves this incident.



ROPATA AND THE HAU-HAUS



XV

ON retiring from Her Majesty's service, I was appointed to make an inspection of the Army Medical Department of the Colonial forces. This brought me into close contact with a new set of men. I shall not enlarge upon my own adventures and hair-breadth 'scapes. It is sufficient to say that, though insignificant, they were quite startling enough for a man of my prudent turn of mind. My object is to sketch a contrast. For this purpose I need only confine myself to bare narrative.

I arrived at Waiapu, on the east coast of the North Island, where Major Fraser was in command of about a hundred Europeans and as many friendly Maori as for the time cared to join in the consumption of his supplies.

We marched in the dark, so as to arrive soon after the break of day at the enemy's fortified pa, Puke-Marire. We found it perched on a hill, skirted by forest on each side, open and

easy of access in the front. Major Fraser took up a position about 400 yards to the front of the pa, and threw his handful of men out in skirmishing order, giving instructions that no man must venture beyond prescribed limits, which were carefully pointed out. The Colonial troops opened fire. The friendly Maori sat down at a secure distance to watch events. Major Fraser folded his arms and walked up and down like the captain of a ship, occasionally examining the position with his glasses.

One of our men had advanced too near the pa on our right front. The Major sent a corporal and two men to fetch him back. He was marched back between sentries, and when brought face to face with the Commanding Officer, he commenced cursing and swearing in the most voluble manner. Major Fraser dismissed the corporal and his guard, and took no notice whatever of the prisoner. This made the worthy Colonist more furious than ever. He tore off his cartouche-box, hurled it on the ground, rammed his bayonet up to the muzzle of the rifle into the earth, danced upon his forage-cap, called Major Fraser a white-livered sneak, who, afraid to fight himself, would not let any one else do it for him.

Major Fraser walked impassively up and

down like a deaf-mute. The Colonist could make nothing of this, so he presently took out his pipe, lit it, sat down, and had a smoke.

I watched this man when the fun really began. He snatched up his rifle, seized his cartouche-box, and, forgetting both his forage-cap and his anger, rushed with all speed lest any other fellow should get into the pa before him.

Well, all I can say is, the whole affair was quite unlike anything I had ever seen before. When the word was given, every man fought for himself; and though they were all well forward, there was little for the enemy to fire at. My attention was diverted from the advance of the Europeans by the arrival of our allies, the Ngatiporou, under Major Ropata. They advanced at full speed in a solid square, with their bayonets aloft glittering in the sun. They ran for hundreds of yards, without breaking their formation, and then in a moment scattered like a flock of birds. I was my own master, so I pelted after them as fast as I could run. They took to the forest on our left. After a toilsome chase, I overtook them. They were now established at the rear of the enemy's position.

Here the Puke-Marire pa fell sheer to the

river, and towered above us about thirty or forty feet. The rock was of a soft sandstone formation. As we stood at the foot of this precipice we were safe from the Hau-Haus: their fire passed over us. Major Ropata instructed some of his men to climb the forest trees, where, under the shelter of the spreading branches, they acted as sharpshooters. The rest of the force set to work with axes, and cut zig-zag steps in the sandstone. As soon as this was done, men mounted, and about five feet six from the level of the pa, which was built close to the precipice, they cut out a junk lengthways, about eight or ten inches deep. They worked upwards at this until they could look over and fire straight into the enemy's rifle-pits. A body of men now occupied this vantage-ground. At the word of command they all loaded. Then the right-hand man sang out, "Hi! Ha! Hau!" At the final word, "Hau!" each Ngatiporou placed his rifle above his head, resting it on the bank in front of him, and pulled the trigger. The result was a uniform close volley.

This tactic was renewed again and again, till invariably at the word "Hau!" the hostile Maori ducked his head, and disappeared in his rifle-pit. At a given moment when the word

"Hau!" was heard, the Ngatiporou diverged their fire to the right and left, leaving a V-shaped space secure in the middle. A small Maori boy, furnished with a hawser, jumped on to that area of safety, and, making weird movements of defiance, cast the loop of the hawser over a large post of the stockade, and then jumped over the precipice, and was caught by his waiting tribe.

A noble-looking antagonist, with shaggy head and glittering eye, rose with an axe to cut away the loop of this hawser. He was shot dead by one of Ropata's men perched in an adjacent tree. The bulk of Ropata's men at the base of the precipice hauled on the hawser, while the sharpshooters from the trees and the men on the ledge poured in a deadly fire on the enemy. Ropata now found a drain at the right angle of our position of assault. It had been cut to let the storm-water run freely off the pa into the river.

Into this drain Ropata crept, till he got inside the fortification. Here he seized his nearest unsuspecting enemy by the feet, dragged him out, and hurled him down to his tribe, who danced a war-dance; then at the word of command scaled the precipice like swarming bees, rushed through the breach

where the beam had given way, and carried the whole position on that side as the Europeans entered on the other. Nearly all the enemy got into the forest, as they knew well the crucial moment for flight. Except for the moral effect, the victory was of little value, for the hostile Maori merely ran away to fight again.

In point of fact, the Maori war wore itself out as the charm of the national and religious sentiment became attenuated. No armies could conquer such a people in such a country. Food was all the time practically abundant, and unless you exterminated the whole race, you could not wipe out their feverish ambition and restless, imaginative self-confidence. The Maori never had any quarrel with the Colonists, who in their hearts loved and respected the fierce spirit of independence which is the chief characteristic of this wonderful race.

It must ever remain a monument to the wisdom and humanity of the Parliament of New Zealand that it succeeded in securing and maintaining the confidence of such a people.

It must not be forgotten that there were two epochs in the war—the National movement under Wiremu Tamihana, the King-maker, and the wave of religious enthusiasm called

“Hau-hauism” which followed it. The Imperial troops broke the back of the National movement both in Taranaki and Waikato. The Colonial troops with their Native allies saw the religious fever flicker and die. The Maori race remains, and competes in the field of intellect and athletics to this day.

If the truth were known, the New Zealanders were more proud of their Maori contingent in the late Jubilee procession in London than of anything else, except their own Anglo-Saxon blood. The New Zealanders hold they are the first people who, neither conquerors of nor conquered by a coloured race, have made them friends and equals to the advantage of all.

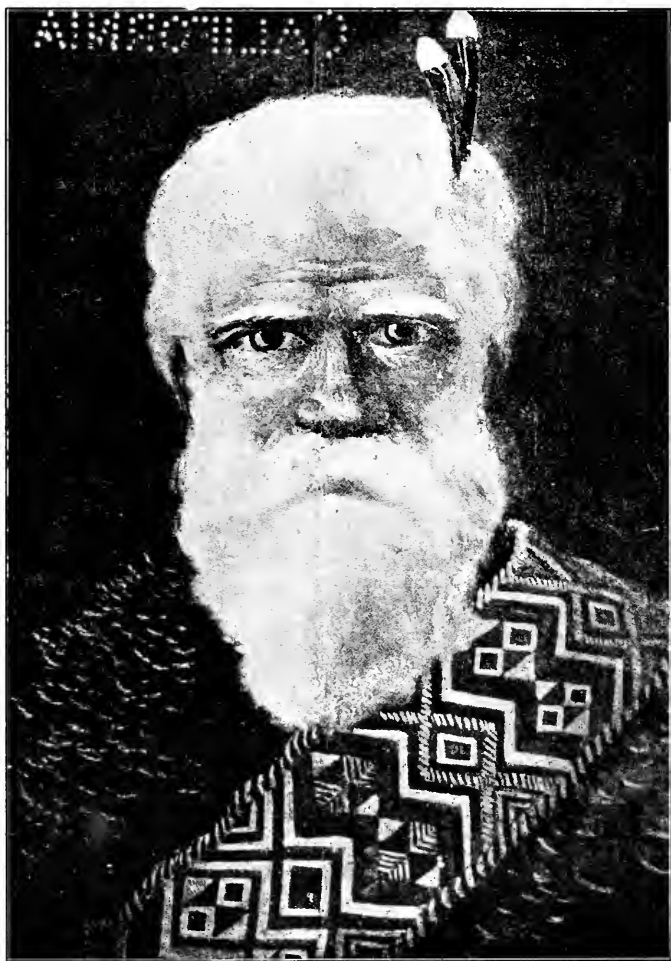
On leaving Waiapu, I went to Opotiki, where Mr. Volckner had been murdered. Here I fell in for the first time with Colonel McDonnell in his new character of soldier and Maori captain. I saw his contingent go into action, and was much struck by the novelty of the method.

Colonel McDonnell, armed with a breech-loader, started out in a rough country at the rate of about five miles an hour, personally to engage the enemy. His Maori soldiers kept up to him as well as they could in a long

“gypsy steele.” As soon as the engagement commenced, nothing could restrain Colonel McDonnell’s zeal. He was at the head of everything ; led in a series of personal encounters of which the battle consisted, and seemed to carry a charmed life. The Native chiefs on McDonnell’s side vied with him in personal gallantry, and the common men filled up the space anyhow.

The singular good temper with which the antagonists killed each other in this encounter was the chief feature. If the wrong man happened to be shot by the wrong side, there was not much fuss about it. It seemed to be all in the day’s work.

When the battle was over, there was discussion about tomahawking the wounded ; but McDonnell put an end to all that by tapping the butt of his breech-loader and looking mighty dangerous. Our Maori soon discovered that the wounded “Hau-haus” were really their close relations, and took as much care of them as if they were new playthings just discovered by children. The wounded, with the singular placidity of the race, took battle, wounds, petting and all as if they had been accustomed to it, and gave without stint valuable information as to the numbers and



KEREOPA, WHO SWALLOWED VOLCKER'S EYES

disposition of the enemy. By chatting with these men I got their account of the Volckner incident.

The singular thing about a Maori is that he always talks without bias, in a perfectly calm, philosophic spirit. This arises from the fact that his intellect is cultivated from childhood. The life is in common, and the smallest bairn has the right to enter into discussions touching the affairs of his *hapu*, or tribe.

“Why did you murder Volckner?”

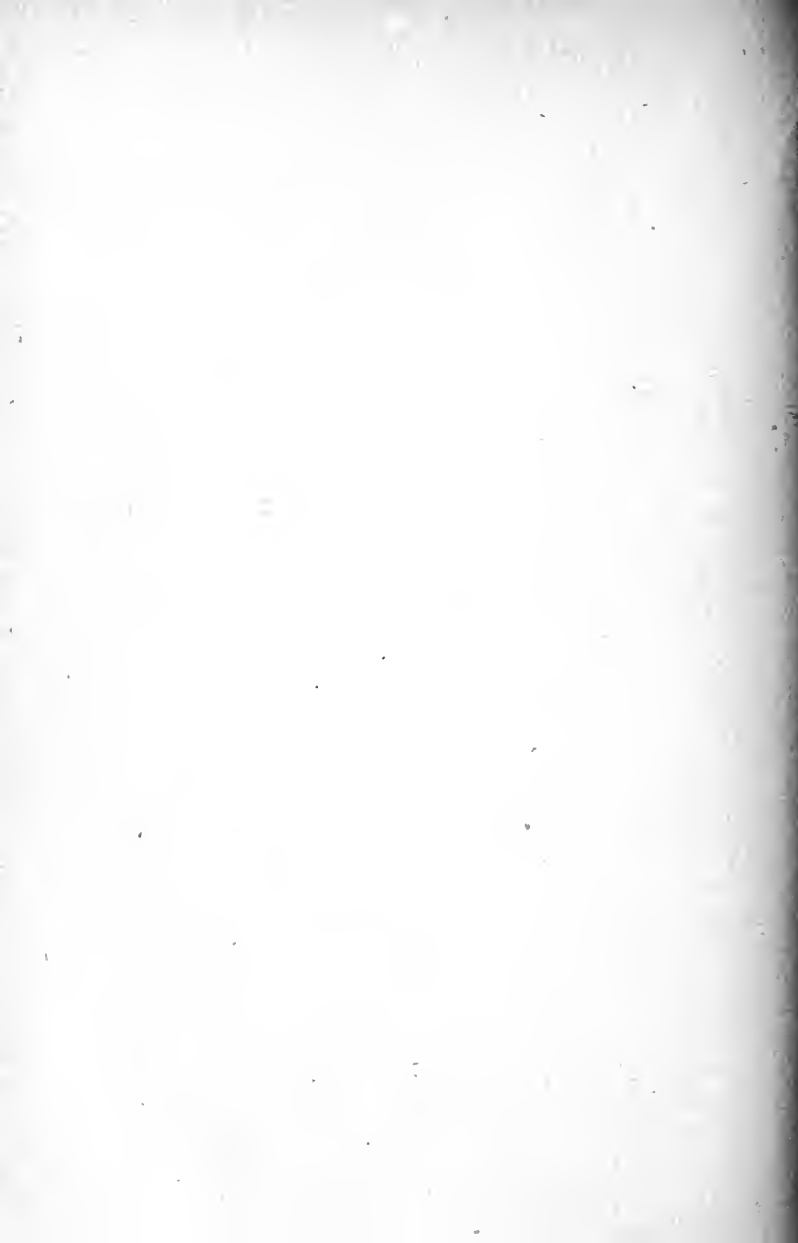
“We executed him according to law. He was fairly tried in our runanga-house, openly confronted with his own letters giving information to the soldiers, our enemies. He was one of our people; we had adopted him into our tribe. He acknowledged the adoption, and lived with us for many years. He was a traitor, and we hanged him according to the law of nations.”

“But Kereopa tore out the dead man’s eyes, and swallowed them!”

“There is nothing in that. There is no difference between a dead man’s and a dead fish’s eye. As Kereopa swallowed the right eye, he said, ‘This is the Queen.’ Of the left eye he said, ‘This is the Parliament.’ It was only a symbol.”



BEGUILING THE NGATIPUKEKA



XVI

IT became necessary for me to reach Tauranga, in order to return to Wellington. I informed Colonel McDonnell of this fact, and asked him for a horse and a guide. He explained to me the journey had its dangers, because the hostile Maori occupied the country between Opotiki and Maketu. He promised to send out spies and let me know when the track might be reasonably considered safe. I noticed that his spies were all women.

At one time he would say, "If you start at once, the road will be found comparatively safe." In a quarter of an hour he would send word, "Emma has just come in, and reports an ambush at the river mouth." Then in ten minutes, "Martha informs me that the Hauhaus have retired to the forest."

My reply was always the same: "My dear McDonnell, give the word, and I am off. I will take whatever risk you consider reasonable."

At length a Maori boy appeared, leading a

starved-looking wild horse. The horse had on a halter-bridle and an old saddle with a stirrup on one side and a piece of rope, as a substitute, on the other. The boy was mounted bareback, with a loop of rope round his horse's nose.

McDonnell said, "Now, start at once, and gallop along the sea beach! Once you have crossed the river, which is only five or six miles distant, you may strike inland, and will be comparatively safe."

Maori horses always travel with their heads up in the air, and gallop recklessly as long as they have a leg under them. Away we went, the Maori boy leading. We very soon arrived at the river, which at the mouth looked about 150 yards wide, and was in flood. The boy dismounted and hunted up and down the river for a canoe. After a time he returned and said, "The canoe has been washed away. The river is too high and broad for these horses to carry us over. We must either return or travel inland in search of a ford."

We travelled up the bank of the river for miles. At length we saw a practical ford. We were half-way across when Maori in numbers came running towards us.

I cried out in a loud voice, according to Maori custom,—

"How are you? How are you all? It is a great pleasure to see you!"

This rather staggered the Ngatipukeka. I had just dropped into their power. They had not spoken to a white man since the death of Volckner. I rode straight up, and shook hands with many of them, then dismounted and handed the halter of my horse to a youth who stood near. The Maori looked much surprised, and immediately assembled in numbers to gratify their curiosity, and hear the news. I wore a sword over my waterproof coat, and had on a forage cap with V.R. on it in large gold letters. As they evidently expected me to say something, I looked wise and solemn, and told them to collect all their people for a talk in the afternoon. This quite satisfied them. I then moved about amongst the people and made friends. In particular, I sought to ingratiate myself with the women, so as to extract from their talk some inkling of the public feeling.

Whilst walking about and chatting, I studied with minute attention the facial expression of each male adult Maori I came in contact with. At length I picked out a man I considered trustworthy, and secretly handed him a flask of spirits I carried in my breast pocket.

This was a propitiatory offering, and he took it as such.

About four o'clock in the afternoon a large wood fire was lit. An old marquee tent, evidently carried off from our men as the result of some sudden surprise, was pitched to the leeward of the fire. My place was allotted in front of the tent door. The most important chiefs were seated to my right and left, and the tribe generally—men, women and children—completed the circle. Dead silence prevailed. It was clear I was expected to speak. I knew better than that. I had often seen Donald McLean at these runangas, and I knew that a great chief must cultivate silence and imperturbability. It is the custom at these meetings for the least important people to speak first. My object was to gain time, study the attitude and temper of the Ngatipukeka, and frame my address to suit it.

Speeches were delivered for about an hour and a half. The chief men both on my right and left had spoken, and the temper of the tribe had been played upon, according to the varying humour of the orators.

I rose, and said,—

“Salutations to you, O Ngatipukeka! I have come from Wellington. Governor Grey

is sad at the slaughter of his children of both races. There has been enough fighting. Let us have peace, and live in brotherly contentment. It has not been the custom of great tribes to fight for ever. You have had satisfaction; we have had satisfaction. Let the dead on each side rise up, and attest this truth. I have spoken."

Complete silence followed. Then up rose a chief, whose bitter hostility I had noted from the beginning.

"What the Queen's officer says may be well. But what about the Arawa? They are now all armed with rifles, well-fed and equipped. The Europeans are their friends. The sea is open to them for supplies. Once peace is made, the soldiers will be withdrawn to England. The Arawas will fall upon us, and our fate will be hard indeed. Already they have driven off all our cattle. The soldiers guard the Maketu River; we cannot recover them. What does the Pakeha say?"

I arose, and, gazing around with sneering lip and distended nostril, said,—

"Ah, great is the wisdom of the council-chief; far-reaching his guile; deep as the ocean his love for his people. Has he forgotten that the Arawas, even with the assist-

ance of the soldiers, could not conquer the Ngatipukeka? Is he not aware that, in order to steal cattle, the Arawa had to come like thieves in the night—not like warriors in the morning? Once peace with the Europeans is made, ask your war-chiefs whether the Arawa will not fade away before your valour, as their ancestors did. I have spoken. Yet great is the Pakeha's admiration for the courage of your tribe. Write now a letter challenging the Arawa to meet you in combat. I will deliver it in person. Send a detachment of your men with me. Once landed on the opposite bank of the river, I shall hurl defiance at the Arawa in your name. *Kati*—enough."

I had outflanked the wily old devil, and he knew it. Food was served; wild pig, potatoes, and tea, made of the leaf of the ti-tree. At length numbers of us crowded into the tent, and slept like herrings in a tin case.

About two o'clock there was an alarm. First I felt my revolver, thinking my last hour had come. Soon I perceived the tent was on fire. The fire was extinguished, but the tent was destroyed. We all lay down on the ground. Soon it began to rain, and soaked us to the bone. We arose in the morning, and I was summoned by a council of chiefs to consider the terms of

the challenge to the Arawa. My enemy was there. I knew by instinct he had drafted the challenge. The pen used was a sharpened stick. The ink had been made of moistened powder.

I read the challenge with an air of much scorn, laid it down, took it up again, carefully studied every word of it, altering the expression of my countenance from scorn to deep, unimpassioned thought. I knew I had my antagonist in an agony of solicitude. I had destroyed his wisdom last night. What might I not do this morning? After much anxious thought I said, "It is good." I had secured the friendship of the writer. My life was safe.

I folded up the challenge, which was written on a piece of cartridge-paper, in my pocket case. The council broke up, and I retired alone. On my way I met the Maori to whom I had given my spirit-flask the day before. He made a sign to me, and I accompanied him into the scrub. Once there, he took from under his mat my spirit-flask, and handed it back to me. I said,—

"Keep it: it is for you."

He said, "Unscrew the top."

I did so. The liquor had not been touched

I was amazed. Here was a man who had not tasted liquor for years, and yet, out of delicacy for my position, had resisted the temptation during such a night. I said,—

“Drink!”

He replied: “No. You are a stranger and a guest. No man would do such a thing.”

I said: “It is yours, not mine. Drink.”

He said: “Drink first, then.”

I did so, merely tasting it, then handed him the flask. He emptied it at a draught.

“Keep the flask in memory of me.”

He did so, and we parted.

Accompanied by an escort, I rode to the Maketu River. There dismounting, I approached the bank, and taking out a white handkerchief waved it for some time. My escort stood back under cover of some scrub. Soon the Arawa sent over a canoe. On arrival at the opposite shore, I handed the Arawa the Ngatipukeka challenge. My escort came forth and danced defiance on their bank. The Arawa responded in kind. The incident was over: I was safe.

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SIR GEORGE GREY AND
GENERAL CHUTE



XVII

THE great difficulty experienced by General Cameron in conducting the war consisted in the intricate series of obstacles put in his way by Governor Grey. Sir George Grey was an extremely polished, gentlemanly, handsome man, with a soft manner and a seething volcano for a heart. He hated General Cameron, with the cold, concentrated rage of a self-devouring nature. I could tell you precisely the why and wherefore, were I in a confidential mood. I am only concerned now with my final interview with General Chute. I met him in Wellington. He came forward, and said,—

“Well, how is your good lady?”

(He was himself still a bachelor.)

“Very well, indeed, thank you, General. By the way, General, how did you get on with Sir George Grey?”

“I had no trouble with him whatever.”

“How did you manage?”

“Sir George always sent for me, and said,

‘ You know, General, we must do so and so, and so and so.’

“ I replied, ‘ Yes, Your Excellency.’

“ He invariably wound up by saying, ‘ Now, General, you thoroughly understand the policy unfolded and the plan of campaign?’ And I replied, ‘ Yes, Your Excellency.’

“ As soon as I had gone away, I sat down and wrote him the following letter :—

“ ‘ To His Excellency,

Sir George Grey, K.C.B.,

Commander-in-Chief of Her Majesty’s
Naval and Military Forces.

“ ‘ SIR,—

“ ‘ I have the honour to inform you I am troubled with a very bad memory, and I have quite forgotten all you said to me, and will you be good enough to put your instructions in writing ?

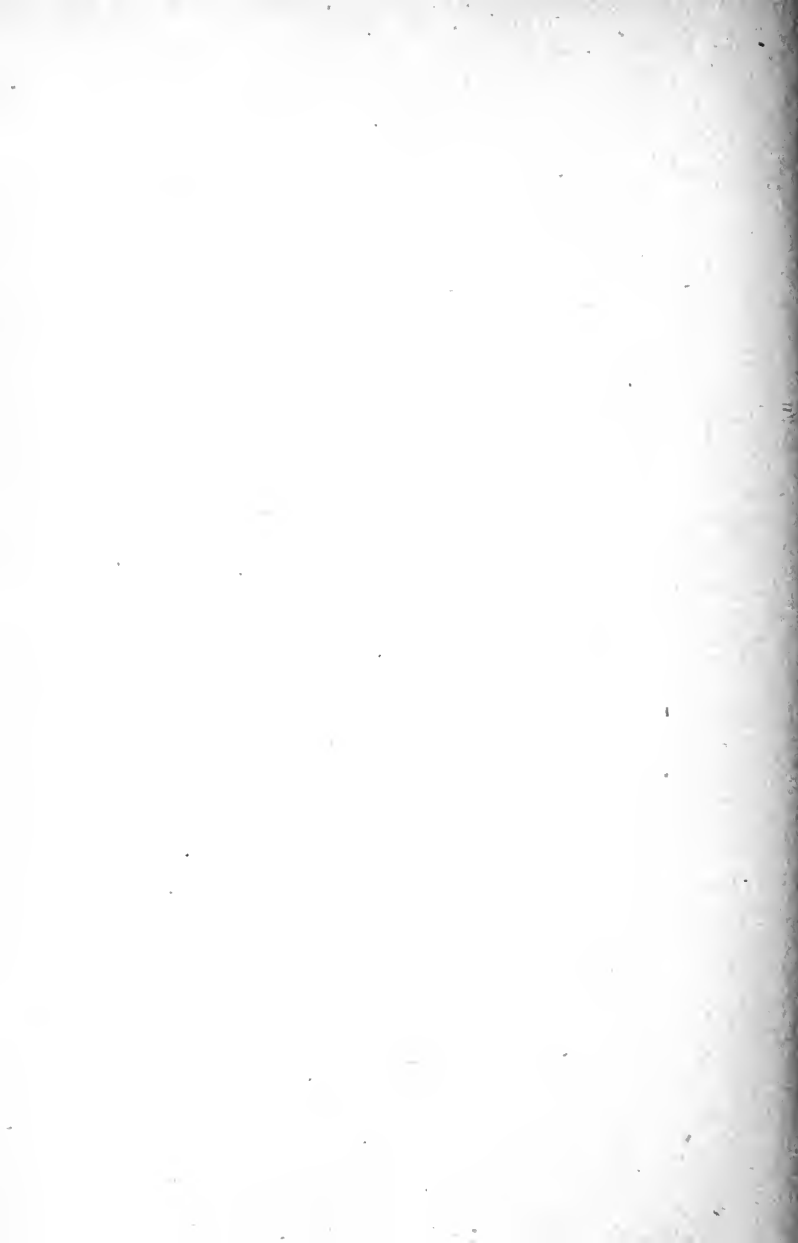
“ ‘ I have, etc.,

“ ‘ TREVOR CHUTE,

“ ‘ Major-General.’

“ He never put anything in writing, and I did whatever I liked ; and so, you see, I finished the campaign in a few months.”

CONCLUSION



XVIII

THE New Zealand War lasted about ten years. It might well have lasted another seven, had it not been for the good sense of the Maori.

What can a civilized nation do with a race which considers the most extraordinary achievements easy and natural? We had about one hundred and twenty Maori imprisoned in a hulk anchored miles out of Wellington Harbour. These were men Colonel McDonnell had taken as prisoners. Amongst them was the one-legged hero of Kakaramaea, whose story I told on a former occasion. One very stormy night a strong nor'-wester was blowing. The sea was washed into foam, and the waves were breaking over the old hulk as she lay at anchor. The military guard being for the most part comfortably asleep, the Maori slid one by one out of the porthole, and drifted with the wind to Nghauranga, swimming a distance of about four miles.

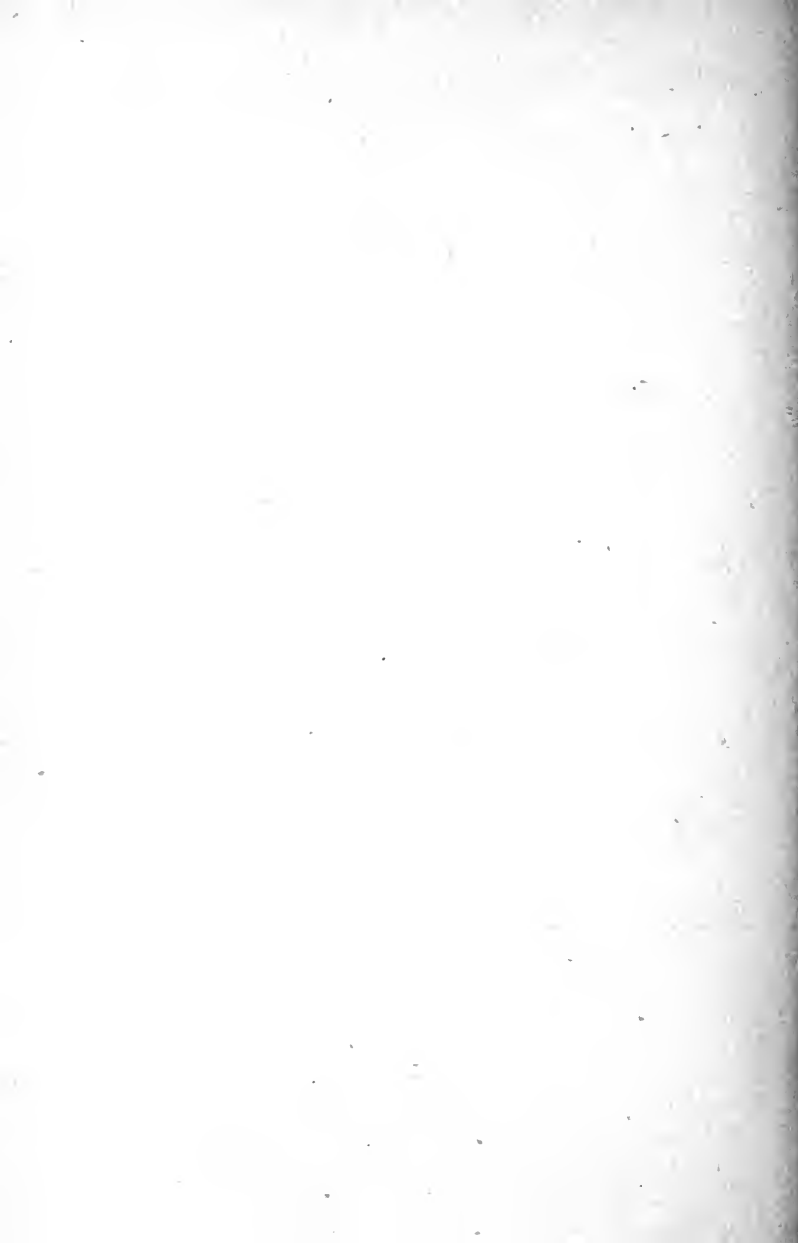
Their chief was old and feeble, so their strongest men took it in turns to support him in the water. Some of their bravest were worn out and drowned in this heroic service. The whole of the prisoners, including the old chief and the one-legged hero of Kakaramaea, with the exception of five who were drowned in the struggle to save their chief, landed in safety, and had so effectually disappeared by daylight that we never saw any more of them.

The Maori were never conquered. They might have been exterminated—conquered in a military sense, no. They realized that a Maori kingdom in which the White Man should be subject to the Maori had become an impossibility, and therefore ceased fighting.

As a race they had never despised or hated the White Man. They determined as a piece of statecraft to become one with the white people, and they have succeeded in every particular. The Maori never faltered with his self-respect. No single Maori ever betrayed his race.

The Maori made the best of his position, took all he could get, and yielded as little as possible. For all practical purposes we are one people and proud to remain so; and certainly neither in intellect, physique, nor morals

can the Maori well be considered our inferiors. Unfortunately they are not our equals in sustained industry. If they fail to correct that deficiency, they must go under. We shall be the first to mourn their fall.



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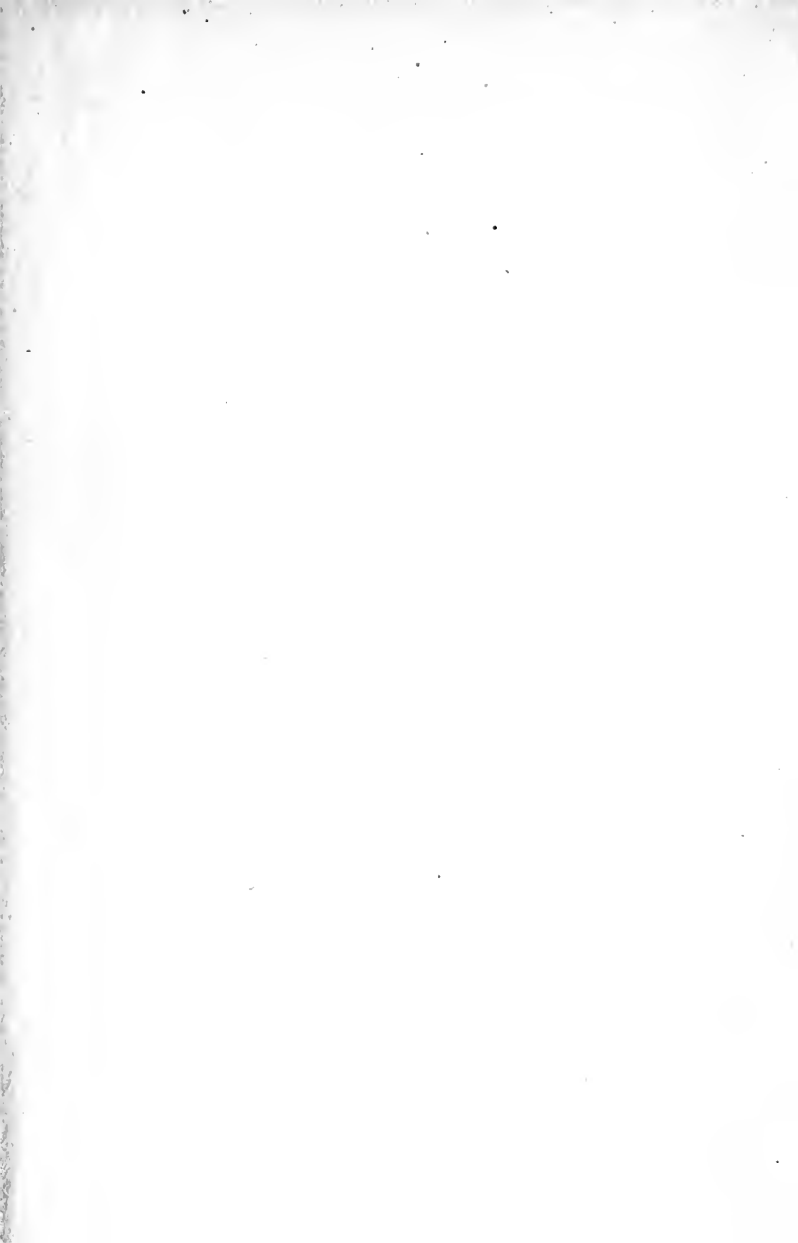
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